The Very Idea of Organization

Social Ontology Today: Kantian and Hegelian Reconsiderations

Christian Krijnen

The Very Idea of Organization

Critical Studies in German Idealism

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By

Christian Krijnen

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Es ist aber ein gewöhnliches Schicksal der menschlichen Vernunft in der Speculation ihr Gebäude so früh wie möglich fertig zu machen und hintennach allererst zu untersuchen, ob auch der Grund dazu gut gelegt sei.

It is, however, a common fate of human reason in speculation to finish its edifice as early as possible and only afterwards to inquire whether the ground has been well prepared for it.

IMMANUEL KANT, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*), B 9

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Abbreviations of Works Cited

All translations from foreign (especially German) texts into English are mine, although I have benefited immeasurably from consulting current translations.

Numbers preceded by "§" refer to paragraphs. Remarks (*Anmerkungen*) are indicated by "N", additions (*Zusätze*) by "A".

Hegel

I   *Wissenschaft der Logik: Erster Teil* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1951).

II   *Wissenschaft der Logik: Zweiter Teil* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1951).

Enz *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830)* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1991).

PG   *Phänomenologie des Geistes,* in *Gesammelte Werke* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1968 ff.).

Rph *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1955).

TWA *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), cited by volume.

V   *Vorlesungen. Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1993), cited by volume.

Kant

References according to *Kants gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin 1910 ff.); KrV and KpV according to the standard A and/or B pagination of the first and/or second editions, respectively.

KrV   *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*

KpV   *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*

KdU   *Kritik der Urteilskraft*

GMS   *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*

MS   *Metaphysik der Sitten*

Logik *Logik*

AA   *Kants gesammelte Schriften*

Introduction

(1) This book offers a philosophical account of the phenomenon of organization. It takes as its starting point an ongoing debate in organization studies about the foundations of organizational research, the so called 'meta-theoretical debate'. This debate, however, is running into difficulties regarding the basic concept of the reality that organization studies deal with, that is to say, regarding the ontology of organization. The meta-theoretical debate poses the question: what is an organization?, or to put it in terms of the book title: what is the very idea of organization?

The debate is currently dominated by three meta-perspectives ('paradigms'): the positivist, the social constructionist, and the critical realist. Despite all the efforts, within the dominant meta-perspectives a convincing organizational ontology is not in sight. A new meta-perspective has to be introduced that offers a more comprehensive and more fundamental social ontology in general as well as an organizational ontology in particular. This book will develop such a meta-perspective for a present-day social ontology. This new meta-perspective is, nevertheless, prefigured by an older philosophy: the philosophy of German idealism.

It is my thesis that this philosophy offers substantial possibilities for developing a present-day social and organizational ontology. Until now, these possibilities have remained underestimated and insufficiently explored. This is partly due to the fact that social and organizational ontology (in the sense of a philosophy of the subject matter of the social sciences) are not a core topic in German idealist philosophy. As a consequence, German idealist philosophy needs to be rejuvenated. This involves not only carving out the type of idealism that suits the purpose best; it moreover, and in essence, involves an in-depth discussion between Kantian transcendental philosophy (as it has taken shape particularly in neo-Kantianism and contemporary transcendental philosophy) and Hegel's philosophy regarding the foundations of social reality. This eventually boils down to a Hegelian turn in social ontology and a corresponding construction of the concept of organization.

The book presents a variety of novel ideas with regard to both the foundations of the social sciences and a German idealist type of philosophy. It results in a new philosophical methodology for approaching social phenomena. In contrast to various contemporary attempts at updating German idealism, it takes the format of classical German idealism more into account, including the idea that philosophy should be developed in the course of a system of philosophy, entailing a certain order of philosophical themes and disciplines.

Organization, a system of consciously coordinated activities of persons to achieve one or more purposes, turns out to result from human freedom, from humans giving shape to the world they live in. It concerns the form of social units in which purposes are actualized. Although it is more promising to determine the concept of organization within Hegel's system of philosophy than in a Kantian setting, organization should not be identified with 'economy' or any other sphere of what Hegel calls 'objective spirit'. In contrast, organization concerns a subsequent theme, effective throughout in Hegel's realm of *Sittlichkeit* (or as it is called in the Anglo-Saxon literature on Hegel: 'ethical life'). The adequate place to expose the theme of organization is Hegel's 'system of needs'. Organization is shown to be driven by the principles of profitability, sustainability, and favorability of labor.

(2) What may the readership, that is, scholars in philosophy, social theorists, and practitioners having an interest in the foundations of sociality and organization, expect more in detail? Let me sketch the line of thought by paraphrasing the chapters of the book. The first chapter provides an introduction to the subject matter and its problematic character, taking the current meta-theoretical debate in organization studies as its starting point. The subsequent chapters contribute, step by step, to its solution within the perspective of German idealist philosophy, concluding with a determination of the idea of organization the meta-theoretical debate was hunting for.

Chapter One: What is Organization? From Organization Theory to Organizational Ontology. As organization theory claims to produce knowledge about organizations, it has at least an implicit notion of what an organization is. Actually, for methodological reasons every organization theory presupposes the meaning (determinacy and validity) of the concept of organization as the most fundamental concept concerning the subject matter (issue, topic, object, theme) of organization theory. I first show that attempts to make the determinacy of the presupposed concept of organization explicit and to justify its validity scientifically[1] from the perspective of *organization theory* are doomed to failure. Secondly, it will become clear that a *philosophy* of organization is needed. Within the field of organization studies, there is indeed a fierce theoretical debate about the concept of organization, called the *meta-theoretical* debate. This debate not only concerns epistemological issues but the ontology of organization too. It is dominated by three meta-perspectives (paradigms):

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1   In the whole book, 'science' is taken in a broad sense. It includes the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, and the liberal arts.

positivism, social constructionism, and critical realism. Unfortunately, within the context of these perspectives a convincing ontology of organization is not available. The debate, thus, is in need of a new meta-perspective. The third part of the first chapter hints at a solution, to be advanced in the subsequent chapters. From a historical perspective, the paradigm for such a new meta-perspective is the philosophy of German idealism (as it was initiated by Kant, transformed by Hegel, and further developed by the neo-Kantians, phenomenologists, and contemporary transcendental philosophers).

Chapter Two: Towards an Idealist Social Ontology—Criticisms and Challenges. How, then, should an up-to-date idealist social ontology be developed? Chapter two delineates the idealist approach most suitable for tackling the problem of social ontology. First, I point out social ontological approaches that do not intrinsically build on philosophies of classical German idealism as it was introduced by Kant and revised by German idealists like Fichte, Hegel, and the neo-Kantians. Second, recognition theory is discussed as the most prominent position trying to rejuvenate German idealism, in particular taking Hegel's philosophy into account. Moreover, recognition theory attempts to transform the concept of recognition into a new paradigm of philosophy. In the course of the discussion of this intriguing attempt, it will become apparent that recognition theory abandons essential and still relevant features of German idealist philosophy. For that reason, the final sections of the second chapter will set out challenges to an alternative appropriation of classical German idealism for developing an up-to-date social ontology.

Chapter Three: Constructing Social Reality—From Kantian Transcendental Philosophy to a Hegelian Concept of the Social. Chapter three picks up the sketch of an alternative approach for contemporary idealist social ontology. On the basis of the methodology outlined, it constructs social reality, hence, determines the concept of the social. This construction starts with the final insight of chapter two, namely that post-Hegelian history supplies the material for us, when we aim to construct the social in Hegel's philosophy. Neo-Kantianism, in particular Heinrich Rickert, can serve as an adequate point of departure to exploit post-Hegelian history of philosophy for getting a conceptual grip on the social. Notwithstanding what is suggested by the name neo-Kantianism, Hegel is present throughout here. Rickert's conception has a paradigmatic function for both the developments within neo-Kantianism and later Kantian transcendental philosophy. On the basis of the insights attained into the concept of sociality within Kantian transcendental philosophy, it becomes clear how to conceive of the social in Hegel's philosophy, how it differs from Kantian transcendental philosophy, and how to appreciate it against the Kantian background. In both conceptions, sociality is essentially about actualizing freedom.

This convergence, however, goes along with essential divergences, which is the theme of chapter four.

Chapter Four: Social Reality as Existence of Freedom—Hegelian versus Kantian Idealism on Actualizing Validity. The Kantian and Hegelian type of an idealist construction of sociality, hence, of actualizing validity, or to put it differently again, of the existence of freedom, are confronted with each other. In chapter three, methodological differences between Kantian transcendental philosophy and Hegel in determining the social do not play a significant role. It is obvious, however, that differences in the order of the philosophical system will lead to different determinations, relations, and justifications of the social. It is already within Kantian transcendental philosophy that significant differences arise, let alone between Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy. Although both Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy hold the social to be a condition of actualizing freedom, they develop significantly different concepts of that condition. Which of them is more adequate, that is to say, comprehends better what the existence of freedom is? The answer to this question involves dealing with several intriguing issues, like the status of practical philosophy, the role of subjectivity, the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic values, the idea of utility, and the architectonic of realms of reason. Although Hegel's conception is finally revealed to have more potential for comprehending social reality, in the social philosophy of contemporary transcendental philosophy an issue emerges, not addressed by Hegel, that yields the urge to expose the concept of organization.

Chapter Five: The Very Idea of Organization—Phenomenology Revisited. Chapters five and six provide a philosophical exposition of the very idea of organization. This exposition supplies a well-determined beginning of a philosophy of organization within the system of philosophy. It does so in two chapters. Chapter five revisits phenomenology. What is at issue here? In chapter one, a phenomenology was necessary in order to gain organization as a legitimate issue for philosophical explorations. This, however, does not suffice for an exposition of the concept of organization as the intended exposition requires considerably more material determinations of organization. These have to be delivered phenomenologically in addition, focusing on the diversity and the unity in organization theory. As a result, a general concept of organization with a maximal extension is established: organization is a system of consciously coordinated activities of two or more persons to achieve a purpose or several purposes. With a view to the exposition of this concept within the framework of Hegel's philosophy of spirit, some additional material features of organization also need to be discussed. In this respect, it is of major

significance that, by organization scholars, organization is in one way or another immediately linked to freedom. But other material features of organization are relevant also for a Hegelian exposition of organization: the idea of a system, the distinction between (abstract) formalization of behavior versus actual behavior, the issue of set formal purposes and the purpose of survival, the self-regulation of social units, and so forth.

Chapter Six: The Very Idea of Organization—A Hegelian Account. Chapter five results in a general concept of organization, immediately operative on the level of organization theory. This concept is the material that has to be speculatively exposed. First, the proper place to expose the concept of organization in Hegel's system of philosophy needs to be determined. Hegel's civil society, or more precisely, the 'system of needs' is the place to expose the concept of organization (though organization is not identical with economy, and in Hegel's discussion of the state many moments appear that (also) qualify organization in general). The second step speculatively determines the concept of organization. Due to its focus, superordinate concepts that articulate the concept of organization and, hence, enable its material differentiation, fail in Hegel's philosophy of spirit. The history of transcendental philosophy, in particular Flach's analysis of the idea of utility, is made fruitful in this respect. Here, it turns out that the values of economic and social profitability, sustainability, and favorability of labor depict the basic material moments of Hegel's doctrine of 'ethical life' regarding its relevance for organization, and the triadic structure of the moments mentioned predisposes them to a speculative articulation in conformity with the logic of the concept. As a philosophical spin-off, it also becomes clear how it is possible at all to explore post-Hegelian constellations in a Hegelian fashion. Correspondingly, chapter six concludes with an exposition of the 'idea of organization'.

A short 'Epilog' reflects some aspects of the relevance of that concept of organization for the social sciences in general and organization studies in particular.

(3) As far as the intellectual background of the book is concerned, it is certainly significant that in much of my work I try to explore and evaluate the relevance of German idealist philosophy for contemporary philosophy. This exploration and evaluation does not only take shape in the manner of an 'internal' idealist discussion but also covers other, in particular contemporary, approaches in philosophy. My dissertation on post-metaphysical meaning and the philosophy of values of neo-Kantianism (*Nachmetaphysischer Sinn: Eine problemgeschichtliche und systematische Studie zu den Prinzipien der Wertphilosophie*

Heinrich Rickerts (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001)) as well as my habilitation on the idea of a system of philosophy (*Philosophie als System: Prinzipientheoretische Untersuchungen zum Systemgedanken bei Hegel, im Neukantianismus und in der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008)) constitute the basis of my expertise in German idealist philosophy. Since my return from Germany to the Netherlands in 2005, a major focus of my research has become the philosophy of the social sciences, especially of organization studies and economics. In this field, I have contributed to both philosophy of science and ontology, for example realism, concept formation, rationality, and social ontology. The problems I was confronted with here, animated me to write a book on social ontology and German idealism. This book is therefore the result of a long-term engagement with the matter at hand. I have examined numerous aspects in articles and book chapters, trying to explore the problem as inclusively and concisely as possible. This book presents a systematic development of these investigations concerning the problem of the social in general and of organization in particular.

Allow me to point out to some publications relevant for this book: 'Recognition: Future Hegelian Challenges for a Contemporary Philosophical Paradigm', in C. Krijnen (ed.), *Recognition: German Idealism as an Ongoing Challenge* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2014), pp. 99–127. 'Heinrich Rickert's Axiological Foundation of Social Ontology', in *Archive of the History of Philosophy and Social Thought* 59 (2014), 185–200. 'Metaphysik in der Realphilosophie Hegels? Hegels Lehre vom freien Geist und das axiotische Grundverhältnis kantianisierender Transzendentalphilosophie', in M. Gerhard, A. Sell and L. de Vos (eds.), *Metaphysik und Metaphysikkritik in der Klassischen Deutschen Philosophie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2012), pp. 171–210. 'Transzendentaler Idealismus und empirischer Realismus', in C. Krijnen and K. W. Zeidler (eds.), *Wissenschaftsphilosophie im Neukantianismus: Ansätze—Kontroversen—Wirkungen* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2014), pp. 11–56. 'Das Soziale bei Hegel: Eine Konstruktion in Auseinandersetzung mit der kantianisierenden Transzendentalphilosophie', in C. Krijnen and K. W. Zeidler (eds.), *Gegenstandsbestimmung und Selbstgestaltung: Transzendentalphilosophie im Anschluss an Werner Flach* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2011), pp. 189–226. 'Anerkennung, Wirklichkeit und praktische Vernunft im Neukantianismus', in C. Graf and H. Schwaetzer (eds.), *Das Wirklichkeitsproblem in Metaphysik und Transzendentalphilosophie: Heinrich Barth im Kontext* (Basel: Schwabe, 2014), pp. 15–51. 'Gegenstandskonstitution bei Husserl und in der klassischen deutschen Philosophie: Eine problemgeschichtliche Deutungslinie', in F. Fabbianelli and S. Luft (eds.), *Husserl und die klassische deutsche Philosophie: Husserl and*

to 2013, securing the *Einsamkeit und Freiheit* (seclusion and freedom) that is needed to develop innovative ideas. My home university, the VU University Amsterdam (Netherlands), congenially allowed me this retreat from the rush of daily university routine.

During the work on the book, I was happy to present and discuss many of its ideas at conferences and colloquia in Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, and the USA. The influence of these symposia, and hence of the many suggestions of the peers on my intellectual development, can hardly be overestimated. A special kind of input was provided by Hans Radder and Kenneth Westphal. Due to the many dimensions this book contains—including organization studies, social ontology, Kant and the neo-Kantian tradition, Hegel, contemporary transcendental philosophy—my numerous efforts to find a catchy title failed time and again. Combining the suggestions of both of them led to what the reader has in his or her hands now. The philosophers of management & organization at the department of philosophy at the VU University Amsterdam, namely Han van Diest, Bas Kee, and Frits Schipper, stimulated me on many occasions by their expertise. Martin Millband helped me profoundly with editorial issues. It has been again a pleasure to cooperate with the publishing house Brill.

What is Organization? From Organization Theory to Organizational Ontology

1 Thinking about Organization

The phenomenon of organization is one of the most striking in modern society. Modern societies are characterized, among other things, by the fact that a plurality of organizations are active in them, fulfilling various tasks. Modern society is even thought to be an "organizational society."[1] Here, people are embedded in a social environment that is dominated by organizations.[2] But what exactly is an organization?

Because of the importance of organizations for modern society, it is not surprising that extensive research is being conducted into organizations, as has been the case since the 1950s. This research is sometimes carried out under the disciplinary title of 'organization studies' or of 'management & organization studies', and sometimes it is part of disciplines like economics, business administration, sociology or psychology.[3] Since organization theorists claim to produce knowledge about organizations, they have at least an implicit notion of what an organization is; otherwise they would not be able to study them. Indeed, for methodological reasons every organization theory *presupposes* the determinacy and validity of the concept of organization as the most fundamental concept concerning the object (subject matter, issue, topic, theme,) of organization theory.[4] How can the determinacy and validity of this presupposed concept be justified?

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1 R. Presthus, *The Organizational Society: An Analysis and a Theory* (New York: Random House, 1962).

2 E. Gross and A. Etzioni, *Organizations in Society* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985), p. 1; W. R. Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems*, 5th edn. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003), pp. 3–4; A. Strati, *Theory and Method in Organization Studies: Paradigms and Choices* (London, Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2000), pp. 2–4; M. de Geus, *Organisatietheorie in de politieke filosofie* (Delft: Eburon, 1989), p. 1.

3 For a survey, see M. Reed, 'Organizational Theorizing: A Historically Contested Terrain', in S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T. Lawrence and W. R. Nord (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Organization Studies* (London: SAGE, 2006), pp. 19–54, or Strati, *Theory and Method*, chap. 1.

4 Ackroyd S. and Fleetwood S. (eds.), *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000); Geus, *Organisatietheorie*; Fleetwood S. and

In this chapter, I want to show first that attempts to make the determinacy of the presupposed concept of organization explicit and to justify its validity scientifically[5] from the perspective of *organization theory* are doomed to failure. I shall illustrate this first on the basis of two current handbooks of organization theory: Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems* (2003),[6] and Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives* (2006).

In the second part of this chapter, it will become clear that in order to answer the question 'what is an organization?' a *philosophy* of organization is needed. Within the field of organization studies there is actually a fierce theoretical debate about the concept of organization and, as a result, about the foundations of organization studies. In this debate, organization scholars try to link philosophy with organization theory in order to gain insight into the concept of organization that lies at the basis of their own research. This debate about the nature of organizations is called *meta-theoretical;* in the literature it is known as the debate about the ontology of organization. The philosophical discipline of ontology, literally: theory of being, occupies itself with the basic concepts of reality. The debate about foundations of organization is dominated by three meta-perspectives (paradigms): positivism, social constructionism, and critical realism. I shall argue that within the context of these three meta-perspectives a convincing ontology of organization, and as a result a convincing determination and justification of the concept of organization that is presupposed in organization theories, is not in sight.

Thus, the debate is in need of a new meta-perspective that is capable of developing a more embracing and more fundamental ontology—the debate needs more philosophy. In the final, third part of this chapter, on the basis of

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Ackroyd S. (eds.), *Critical Realist Applications in Organisation and Management Studies* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004); M. J. Hatch and A. L. Cunliffe, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); M. Reed, 'In Praise of Dualism: Rethinking Agency and Structure in Organizational Analysis', in S. Ackroyd and S. Fleetwood (eds.), *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 45–65; Reed, 'Organizational Theorizing'; Scott, *Organizations*; Strati, *Theory and Method*, Part 1; H. Tsoukas, 'What is Management? An Outline of a Metatheory', in S. Ackroyd and S. Fleetwood (eds.), *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 26–44.

5   In this whole book, 'science' is taken in a broad sense: it includes the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, and the liberal arts.

6   The sixth edition of this work was published in 2007 as W. R. Scott and G. F. Davis, *Organizations and Organizing: Rational, Natural and Open Systems Perspectives* (New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007).

the results of the preceding discussions, I shall hint to a solution: a *new* meta-perspective dawns on the horizon.

2   Organization within the Perspective of Organization Studies

Even a superficial examination of organization theory textbooks shows that there is a multiplicity of schools, traditions, approaches, etcetera, that have produced a multiplicity of 'definitions' of what an organization is. At the same time, it is striking that these definitions are often not in line with each other; some of them seem to contradict each other instead of pointing in the same direction. For various reasons, organization scholars experience this diversity of definitions of the concept of organization as a problem, at least to the extent that they are trying to find an overarching perspective or overarching perspectives within which the multitude of organization theories and corresponding definitions of organization can be related to each other.

2.1   *Scott's Definitions*
A first insight into the problematic character of this quest is offered by a critical analysis of Scott's approach in his repeatedly reprinted book *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems*. Scott distinguishes three definitions of the subject matter of organization theory: a rational-system definition, a natural-system definition, and an open-system definition. These definitions demarcate and define the domain of research of organization theories, and they guide it in three different directions. Scott conceives of these definitions as fundamental *perspectives* on organization. He subsumes the various organization theories in the three perspectives. These three perspectives and their corresponding theories. however, seem to contradict each other. Scott characterizes them as paradigms in the sense of Kuhn.[7] Nevertheless, as each perspective produces useful insights into organizations and their enduring analytical features, he attempts to integrate them into one coherent whole: 'Scott's layered model'.

Apart from detailed problems of an organization-theoretical, epistemological, and ontological nature, from a theoretical point of view the most unsatisfactory aspect of Scott's attempt at integration is the following. On the one hand Scott claims that the different perspectives define the domain of study of organization theory, so that outside the perspectives (which are after all paradigms) no knowledge of organizations is possible. On the other hand he

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7   T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edn. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962).

presupposes an overarching concept of organization that is the basis of the different perspectives: the perspectives are, notwithstanding their differences, perspectives on the *same subject*, videlicet organization; the enduring and valuable insights produced by the different perspectives are knowledge of the same subject matter; the different facets of organizations on which light is shed from different perspectives, are all facets of the same phenomenon of organization. Scott apparently has an 'objective' definition of organization that is independent of the different 'subjective' perspectives. For this reason, he does not take the paradigm-ladenness of his multiple-facet approach seriously—there is a contradiction between the content of Scott's statements and the form that he claims scientific knowledge of organizations has. Of this presupposed fundamental concept of organization Scott gives no account, although this concept makes up the basis of his own approach. Hence, both its determinacy and its validity remain implicit.

When we look carefully, it appears that the open-system definition constitutes the framework for his attempt at integration. This means, however, that one of the definitions (perspectives, paradigms) is privileged. It is revealing that, after he has problematized organizations as an area of study in the beginning of his book and before he introduces the three definitions, Scott gives a definition of organization as that on which the different perspectives are perspectives: "Organizations are, first and foremost, systems of elements, each of which affects and is affected by the others."[8] The elements of each organization are: "environment, strategy and goals, work and technology, formal organization, informal organization, and people."[9] This definition of what an organization is and its validity are taken for granted. This is in itself understandable. Research in individual disciplines necessarily has to take certain assumptions about its object of study for granted, otherwise no research can be done at all. But it is from this disciplinary attitude that Scott addresses theory formation itself, including the presupposition that the three organization theories he distinguishes all have organization as their object. However, at the same time Scott's analysis proceeds from this assumption, that is to say, from an apparently unproblematic concept of organization. This approach produces a contradiction. To put it another way, at the level of the discipline, or from the disciplinary viewpoint, the determinacy and validity of the presupposed concept of organization cannot be established in a scientifically adequate way. A different level of determination is needed to do this. It seems initially that

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8   Scott, *Organizations*, p. 24.

9   Ibid., p. 24.

this level is introduced by Hatch and Cunliffe, who make a different attempt to give an account of the diversity of organization theories.

To some extent, Scott seems to be aware of the need to introduce a different, a philosophical level—but he does not realize that in doing so he undermines his multiple-perspective approach and the corresponding integration in an overarching concept of organization. He points out that the different perspectives are based on *ontological* presuppositions, and that not only the different perspectives but also the corresponding ontological presuppositions are in conflict with each other. These perspectives cannot therefore be viewed, just like that, as Scott does, as determinations of the same identical subject matter, that is organization. In doing so, he in addition conceives of the three perspectives that he distinguishes in more general, namely ontological terms. As a consequence, he introduces willy-nilly a *more general* and *more fundamental* definition of organization than any one of the three perspectives can offer. This more general and fundamental definition is revealed in the conflicting dichotomy of 'substantial' and 'processual' definitions of organizations (organizations are defined either as entities or as processes). It is this ontological and therefore philosophical dichotomy that in Scott's approach hovers, diffusely and full of tension, in the background—but that in Hatch and Cunliffe takes center stage.

2.2   *Hatch and Cunliffe's Perspectives*

Just like Scott, in their *Organization Theory. Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives* Hatch and Cunliffe recognize that there is a multitude of organization theories, some of which are in conflict with each other; and just like Scott, they value this plurality as something positive. It appears that the diversity of organization theories can be subsumed under three perspectives: the modern, the symbolic-interpretative, and the postmodern perspective. These perspectives do not displace each other; according to Hatch and Cunliffe they rather lead to an accumulation and integration of insights. Hatch and Cunliffe view perspectives as paradigms in the sense of Burrel and Morgan.[10] The different perspectives come with different theories and, as a consequence, with different knowledge of organizations. Organization theories are based on perspectives (paradigms). And just as theories are based on perspectives, the different perspectives are based on specific assumptions about the world, and hence, about the subject matter of organization theory: the world of organizations. Hatch and Cunliffe emphasize that these assumptions are *philosophical*

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10   G. Burrell and G. Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life* (London: Gower, 1979).

in nature; or more precisely, they hold that these assumptions involve philo-sophical *choices* concerning *epistemology* and *ontology*. Distinctions can be made between what are called in organization theory subjective and objective ontologies as well as subjective and objective epistemologies. Ontology and epistemology are not only closely interconnected, Hatch and Cunliffe argue for a primacy of ontology: "lurking behind these epistemological positions is an irresolvable debate between their differing ontologies."[11] Just as in Scott, in Hatch and Cunliffe the difference between a substantialist and a process defi-nition of organization is apparent: in the objectivist view organization is char-acterized by a fixed structure, whereas adopting a subjectivist stance means replacing this "objective" by a "subjective" structure, that is to say, by the idea that organizations are "continually constructed" by participants.[12]

If we ignore various matters of detail in Hatch and Cunliffe as well, it strikes us immediately that, as in Scott, the problem of organization is not only the focus of interest of organization theory but also the *common* phenomenon of every organization theory. As a consequence, there somehow has to be some-thing like an overarching determination of organization, as we otherwise lose every legitimacy to speak of organization theory, of organization, of organi-zationally relevant questions, etcetera. In view of the contradictions between the different organization theories, between the perspectives they are based on, and between the philosophical assumptions these are based on in turn, the overarching determination cannot simply be an accumulation of insights. At least, these insights should be insights into the *same subject*, that is organi-zation. The connection between the perspectives constitutes a problem that cannot be solved at the level of one of the perspectives.

Hatch and Cunliffe view perspectives and philosophical assumptions as mere 'choices' and thus ignore the problem of an overarching determina-tion of organization. This not only detracts from the scientific character of organization theory, as scientists are supposed to be able to give *reasons* for their scientific convictions; it is also incompatible with their own notion of perspective, for theories are based on perspectives and perspectives on philo-sophical assumptions. In Hatch and Cunliffe's view, these perspectives shape our experience of organizations. Experience of organizations is therefore always experience in the context of a perspective (and the corresponding philosophical assumptions); hence, the perspective is always *implicitly* opera-tive. For this reason it is incomprehensible what a 'choice' of perspective could mean here, as this choice is always a choice within the context of a perspective

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11   Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, p. 15.

12   Ibid., p. 17.

(possibly a higher-order perspective). That it should be possible to adopt a 'neutral observer's stance' in order to look 'objectively' at 'the' reality of organizations and then to form concepts about this reality—is in itself precisely one of the possible perspectives, namely the objectivist position of modernism and the corresponding positivist epistemology. The 'perspective-ladenness' of theories and experiences advocated by Hatch and Cunliffe thwarts their idea of 'choice': you cannot have your cake and eat it too.

Hatch and Cunliffe emphasize the differences between the perspectives so strongly that the awareness is lost that all these perspectives are perspectives on the same subject. And yet their multiple-perspective approach of organization theory presupposes a concept of an identical subject matter of interest on which these different perspectives are based. It presupposes a subject matter that organization scholars determine in the context of these perspectives, *as perspectives on organization*. As it is the basis of the different perspectives, this overarching concept of organization can be determined neither by any of the perspectives—this would be a determination already within the context of the presupposed concept of organization—nor by a combination of elements from different perspectives. In these attempts at determination, organization remains presupposed as the common subject of interest of organization theory; therefore the concept of organization remains presupposed as the original determining concept of any organization theory.

In short, just as in Scott, the concept of organization remains presupposed in Hatch and Cunliffe's multiple-perspectives approach as the conceptual framework of organization theory. They do recognize that philosophy is needed to gain insight into the basic characteristics of the different perspectives, but they fail to appreciate that philosophy is also needed to develop a well-determined and well-founded concept of organization that can serve as the conceptual framework of organization theory. Instead, they do not go beyond a disciplinary approach, not treating satisfactorily the foundations of that approach. It is therefore not surprising that, just like Scott, Hatch and Cunliffe give a definition of organization bypassing the three perspectives (organization "as technologies, social structures, cultures and physical structures that exist within and respond to an environment"; all these elements being "colored by power").[13] It remains unclear how Hatch and Cunliffe know that organizations are distinguishable entities that consist precisely of the elements they mention. As this definition determines the structure of their book on organization theories, it is once again apparent to what extent the concept of organization

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13   Ibid., p. 19.

is presupposed as a conceptual framework, and how little Hatch and Cunliffe realize this.

2.3   *History and Classification of Organization Theory*

Fortunately, there is also a debate within organization studies about its foundations. In this debate, arguments about these foundations are certainly developed. The philosophical 'assumptions' turn out not to be 'choices' but the result of a theoretical process of appropriation and justification (even apart from the fact that there is a scientific discipline that has such assumptions as its primary theme of study: philosophy). The field of organization theory is a dynamic intellectual practice of theoretical controversies, and it is for sure also a field within which ideological conflicts arise about what 'organization' is. What organization is, is of course not just a matter of ideology. For scientific reasons, the concept of organization should be determined in an intelligible way, which involves more than mere choices or common sense convictions. Before we look at the debate about the foundations of organization theory in detail, we make a concluding remark that shows once more how explosive the problem of the presupposed concept of organization is.

There are not only many different views on what organization is; there are also a remarkable number of different views of the *history and classification of organization theory.*[14] Is it not most amazing that there is such a diversity of opinion about 'histories' and 'classifications' of organization theory? Would one not expect that organization studies have one subject matter, and that the history and classification of organization studies is the history and classification of that one subject? Do these different histories and classifications still concern the same subject matter? They are certainly not exchangeable! On the contrary, there are numerous fundamental contradictions between the different classifications.

Even a cursory look at the books by Scott and by Hatch and Cunliffe makes it clear that both *assume* a certain concept of organization and then produce a history or a classification of organization theory. Hence, the concept of organization presupposed by Scott and by Hatch and Cunliffe enables them to construct a history or a classification of organization theory. Such a concept of organization has to be assumed by anybody who wants to produce a history or

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14   Cf. W. G. Astley and A. H. van de Ven, 'Central Perspectives and Debates in Organization Theory', *Administrative Science Quarterly* 28 (1983), 245–73; Geus, *Organisatietheorie*; Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*; Reed, 'Organizational Theorizing'; Scott, *Organizations*; J. M. Shafritz, J. S. Ott and Y. S. Jang, *Classics of Organization Theory*, 6th edn. (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2005).

a classification of organization theory. It seems that *what* the history (and classification) of organization theory is depends on the *concept* of organization employed by the one who constructs that history (or classification). Not only organization studies themselves but also the historiography and the classification of organization studies presuppose a basic concept of organization.

We may expect of a scientific discipline that it provides in a scientific way clarity about the definition and validity of the concepts it employs, particularly of its basic concepts. At least as far as the basic concepts are concerned, non-philosophical, disciplinary approaches like those of Scott and of Hatch and Cunliffe are clearly inadequate. However, as was mentioned above, within organization theory, there is also a debate about the concept of organization that is presupposed in day-to-day research on organizations. Do the participants manage to make the implicit concept of organization explicit in a scientific way?

3 Let's Go Ontological: The Meta-Theoretical Debate

3.1 *The Challenge of Ontological Presuppositions*

The analyses of Hatch and Cunliffe and of Scott have made it clear that organization theories are based on perspectives and perspectives on various philosophical presuppositions, particularly ontological presuppositions. Organization scholars distinguish objective from subjective, and substantial from processual definitions of organization. Such definitions have implications for the methodology of organization theory, hence, for the scientific knowledge that we have of organizations: ontological presuppositions are relevant methodologically.

In order to gain a better insight into that relevance, we should, on the one hand, not interpret the ontological question 'what is an organization?' in an overly restricted way. In the organization-studies literature the ontology problem is often presented as if the question is,[15] whether reality is dependent or independent of our thought about it, focused on organization studies: whether social phenomena like organizations have their existence and their properties independent of our conceptualization. But the ontology problem is often

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15   See, for instance, P. Johnson and J. Duberley, *Understanding Management Research: An Introduction to Epistemology* (London, Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2000), following an approach that is common in the 'realism debate'.

presented also in such a way that the question is,[16] whether an organization is an objective entity or a subjective construction. These are two different questions (which in Hatch and Cunliffe are conflated without reflection), although answers to the one will of course have implications for answers to the other. Organizational ontology wants to know what 'organization' is; the relation between organization and our knowledge of it can turn out to be relevant for this question, but that relevance is then part of the solution, not the original question.

This more precise presentation of the ontological problem, on the other hand, makes the significance clear of the distinction, much referred to in the organization-ontological discussion, between an objective/substantial and a subjective/processual view of organization, which is also denoted as that between a 'being ontology' and a 'becoming ontology'.[17] According to a being ontology (objectivist ontology), organization is conceived of as a stable, static entity with enduring properties and tendencies, and in this sense as objective and structured. In a becoming ontology (subjectivist ontology) organization is conceived of as an entity that is continually (re)constructed by the participants, and therefore as a temporarily stabilized cluster loosely held together by relational networks of meaning. On top of this, organization is not constructed within an 'objective', stable social structure but within contingent constellations. Therefore, in contrast to a being ontology, in this view organization is a subjective phenomenon: not a fixed entity with enduring properties but an ongoing process of sense-making or world-making. What comes to the fore here is that organizations do not exist independent of human interventions. These interventions are viewed by the advocates of a becoming (subjectivist) ontology as cultural, in particular discursive practices: what an organization is, is ontologically founded in discursive practices and should therefore be explained in terms of these practices as well. While in a being (objectivist) ontology, organizations are conceived of as given, that is, as 'naturally' existing entities that are taken for granted, in the context of a becoming (subjectivist) ontology, organization is something that is created in discursive practices and that has no ontological statute independent of these practices, let alone explanatory relevance: organizations are not 'givens' but 'effects'.

These two fundamentally different ontological views have implications for our knowledge of organizations, that is, for our conceptualization of organiza-

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16   Cf. e.g. R. Chia, 'Ontology: Organization as "World-Making"', in R. I. Westwood and S. Clegg (eds.), *Debating Organization: Point-Counterpoint in Organization Studies* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 98–112; Scott, *Organizations*.

17   Chia, 'World-Making'.

tions. In the context of a being ontology, the subject matter of organization theory is determined in terms of notions like stability, order, regularity, form. By contrast, in a becoming-ontological setting the determination of the subject matter of organizational research is guided by notions like process, flux, formlessness, incessant change, indeterminacy, contingency. The manner of causal explanation is also different. In a becoming-ontological determination of organizations, the focus is on analyzing the discursive practices in which organizations are being produced. In a being-ontological framework, organization scholars try to find universal linear causal relationships ('laws') that govern the way in which organizations function. Because in a becoming ontology organizations are conceived of as the results of specific discursive processes, a universe of organizational entities lacking homogeneous structures or other stable aspects comes into being. This makes it meaningless to look for generalizations that would be determining for all organizations, as is done in the context of a being ontology. According to the becoming ontology, the primary reality is an undifferentiated flux, ceaselessly changing, not an ordered whole from which researchers can distill lawlike regularities; the explanatory focus is on the discursive practices in which organizational identities are constructed.

In short, the different ontologies come with different methodologies and therefore with different sets of explanatory concepts. Depending on the ontological presuppositions of the researcher, organizations have a fundamentally different determinacy: they *are* something fundamentally different.

3.2 *The Meta-Theoretical Positions*

If the ontology of organizations has such a fundamental significance for the determinacy of organizations and organization studies, then it can only be applauded that there is an intensive intellectual debate about the foundations of organization studies, which accompanies organizational research—the 'meta-theoretical debate'.

In the eighties and nineties of the last century, this debate about the foundations of organization theory was largely dominated by researchers operating from the point of view of either positivism or social constructionism (also called: social constructivism or post-modernism). From the middle of the nineties onwards, critical realism has become an important participant in this debate. Critical realism promises a way out of the cul-de-sac of a positivistically overstrained objectivity on the one side and a social-constructionistically overstrained subjectivity on the other.

An ontology, that is, a theory of an object, a matter, as such, and more precisely, a social ontology, that is, an ontology of the social sphere, is a *core* issue of the meta-theoretical debate within organizational research. This debate

about ontology is driven by problems concerning our *knowledge* of organizational phenomena. Explanatorily orientated debates within the social sciences, like those on 'agency versus structure' or 'local versus global', are part of the ontological discussion. The meta-theoretical debate is often called the 'ontology-epistemology' debate. This debate concerns the constitution of the social world and the consequences this constitution has for our knowledge of the social world, especially for organizational research. Positivists advocate—to use the terms customarily employed in the discourse—an objective epistemology and an objective ontology, social constructionists a subjective epistemology and a subjective ontology, critical realists a subjective epistemology and an objective ontology.

According to the protagonists of *positivism,* which dominated the discourse on organization in the sixties and seventies, the phenomenon of organization is to be determined (explained, defined, understood, etcetera) in terms of generalizing concepts, gained by induction ('laws'). As far as their content is concerned, the validity of these concepts depends on their (direct or indirect) observational verifiability: they are reduced to theory-neutral observations, or more precisely, to observational terms, and therefore founded in a reality that is 'independent' of the knowing subject (the researcher), an 'objective' reality. In this (positivistic) sense of objectivity the phenomenon of organization exists *an sich,* in itself. Thus, a positivistic ontology ideally understands the world as consisting of atomistic events of possible immediate sense-experience ('observables').[18]

Social constructionism, however, emphasizes the importance of discursive practices, as social phenomena come into being in such practices and are determined within such practices. Against positivism, social constructionism argues not only that our knowledge of reality is always 'theory-laden', ultimately impregnated by social constellations, but also that something like an 'objective reality' does not exist: every reality is founded in 'discursive practices', 'social constellations'. Independent of these practices and constellations 'reality' does not have any meaning, therefore does not exist 'objectively', 'in itself', but only 'subjectively', 'for us'. In this sense, the phenomenon of organization is not an objective fact but a 'social construction', a socially constructed entity. On top of that, this entity is not constructed within an 'objective', stable social structure

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18   For an organization theory leaning methodically on the ideal of positivism, see studies like L. Donaldson, *For Positivist Organization Theory* (London, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1996), and L. Donaldson, 'Position Statement for Positivism', in R. I. Westwood and S. Clegg (eds.), *Debating Organization: Point-Counterpoint in Organization Studies* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 116–27.

but within a contingent constellation: for social constructionists, organization is not so much a fixed entity with enduring characteristics as an ongoing process of sense-making or 'world-making',[19] a temporarily stabilized cluster loosely held together by relational networks of meaning. As far as scientific knowledge of organizations is concerned, social constructionists hold that the phenomenon of organization can only be determined (defined, explained, understood, etcetera) by means of local methodological conventions; conventions that are, moreover, subject to an infinite process of revision.[20]

In the last decade or so, *critical realism* has established itself as a third meta-perspective for organization studies. In opposition to both positivism and social constructionism, critical realism combines a subjective epistemology with an objective ontology. Critical realism rejects the anti-realist view that the object of knowledge is a social construction (indeed, critical realism denies every epistemic prefiguration of objects, including a prefiguration by basic concepts and epistemic rules): knowledge, respectively epistemology, does not found reality, respectively ontology. More generally, social phenomena cannot be reduced to and explained in terms of discursive practices. They have a reality going beyond these practices. But, unlike positivism, critical realism holds that the foundation of the reality that is experienced immediately by our senses lies in another reality, in a 'deeper reality' of 'generative mechanisms and structures'. This means that critical realists reject an observational foundation of knowledge.[21] Social phenomena like organizations are rather to be determined (defined, explained, understood, etcetera) in terms of a deeper reality of mechanisms and structures.[22] Whereas social constructionism

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19   Chia, 'World-Making'.

20   For an organization theory leaning methodically on the ideal of social constructionism, see studies like S. Linstead, *Organization Theory and Postmodern Thought* (London, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2004), and R. I. Westwood and S. Linstead, 'Language/Organization', in R. I. Westwood and S. Linstead (eds.), *The Language of Organization* (London, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2001), pp. 1–19.

21   N. Blaikie, *Approaches to Social Enquiry* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993); N. Blaikie, *Designing Social Research* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000); M. Reed, 'Reflections on the "Realist Turn" in Organization and Management Studies', *Journal of Management Studies* 42 (2005), 1621–44; S. Ackroyd and S. Fleetwood, 'Realism in Contemporary Organisation and Management Studies', in S. Ackroyd and S. Fleetwood (eds.), *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 3–25.

22   R. Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science*, 2nd edn. (Atlantic Highlands N.J.: Humanities Press, 1978); Danermark B. (ed.), *Explaining Society: Critical Realism in the Social Sciences* (London, New York: Routledge, 2002); Fleetwood and Ackroyd (eds.), *Critical Realist Applications*; Reed, 'Dualism'; Reed, 'Reflections'; A. Sayer, *Realism and Social Science*

conceives such structures and mechanisms as contingent results of discursive practices, critical realism advocates a reality of mechanisms and structures, which exists 'absolutely', in itself, independent of the empirical, observable reality. It is precisely this 'deeper' reality that, according to critical realism, should be the object of the social sciences. Critical realists emphasize correctly that the essentials of their position have important consequences for theory formation in the social sciences, videlicet the methodology of the social sciences.[23]

In this way, critical realism attempts to supplant the epistemological and ontological framework of positivism and social constructionism. According to critical realism, the phenomenon of organization is ontologically founded in a preceding reality, which has the epistemological, or more precisely, the methodological consequence that 'organization' is to be determined in terms of these foundational, 'real' generative structures and mechanisms. From this follows that critical realism combines an objective ontology with a subjective epistemology (that is an epistemology that takes the revisable character of knowledge into account). With this combination, critical realism tries to avoid both the 'cultural-relativistic' fallacy of social constructionism and the misleading primacy of the positivistic 'given'. Neither the dogmatic stipulations of positivist orthodoxy nor the relativism implied in social constructionism satisfy the truth-seeking spirit of science. In this respect, critical realism has a

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(London, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2000); A. Sayer, 'Why Critical Realism?', in S. Fleetwood and S. Ackroyd (eds.), *Critical Realist Applications in Organisation and Management Studies* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 6–20; R. Trigg, *Understanding Social Science: A Philosophical Introduction to the Social Sciences*, 2nd edn. (Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2000); Tsoukas, 'What is Management'.

23   S. Ackroyd, 'Methodology for Management and Organisation Studies: Some Implications of Critical Realism', in S. Fleetwood and S. Ackroyd (eds.), *Critical Realist Applications in Organisation and Management Studies* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 137–63; M. S. Archer, *Structure, Agency, and the Internal Conversation* (Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Reed, 'Dualism'; Reed, 'Reflections'; Danermark (ed.), *Explaining Society*; J. Parker, *Structuration* (Buckingham, Philadelphia, Pa: Open University, 2000); Tsoukas, 'What is Management'; R. Willmott, 'Structure, Culture, Agency: Rejecting the Current Orthodoxy of Organisation Theory', in S. Ackroyd and S. Fleetwood (eds.), *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 66–86.—For an organization theory leaning methodically on the ideal of critical realism, see studies like: Reed, 'Dualism'; Reed, 'Reflections'; Danermark (ed.), *Explaining Society*; Ackroyd and Fleetwood (eds.), *Realist Perspectives*; Fleetwood and Ackroyd (eds.), *Critical Realist Applications.*

good point in the debate. The point, however, is not good enough—especially its *ontology* needs further critical reflection.

3.3   *The Uncritical Foundation of Critical Realism*

Critical realism is right in criticizing the 'flat' ontologies of positivism ('atomistic events') and social-constructionism ('discursive practices'). Reality, in particular social reality, is more complex than we can know purely on the basis of sensory perception and generalizations based on it; motives and the social structures in which human behavior is embedded and motives are formed play a role too (also with regard to our knowledge of reality). However, reality is also more complex than mere actual discursive practices without overarching structural and normative factors within which these organizational and knowledge practices themselves are meaningful. As these flat ontologies are unsatisfactory, critical realists advocate a 'stratified' ontology: in addition to empirical reality, immediately accessible to the senses, there is a reality of underlying structures and mechanisms, accessible only through the formation of concepts or theories.

Critical realism is also correct in pointing out that a subjective ontology presupposes an objective ontology—at least in so far as objective means: not reducible to actual subjective practices. In our analysis of Hatch and Cunliffe and Scott it became clear that processes, changes, and changing constructions have to be conceived of as constructions of the *same* reality, that is to say, of something objective. When organizations are reduced to discursive practices, this presupposed identity is ignored. In addition, the scientific knowledge of these practices is itself conceived as a discursive practice, so that any objective criterion for the validity of this knowledge seems to evaporate: it obviously no longer makes sense to discuss the validity or invalidity of theories when knowledge is a 'mere' social construction, and hence, a subjective matter only. Why should, for example in Chia's analysis,[24] an ontology of becoming be better than an ontology of being? According to what discursive practice is this the case? Why should an adherent of the being ontology ever be persuaded by such arguments? How can a becoming ontologist ever criticize a being ontologist, when criticism presupposes a *common* criterion that transcends both ontologies and links them regarding their validity, whereas the claim of the becoming ontologist is precisely that this link has to be reduced to discursive, continually changing, and in the end contingent processes? Apparently, there are 'higher' viewpoints that play a role in the becoming ontology, which are not

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24   Chia, 'World-Making'.

accounted for in that ontology itself. Therefore, the becoming ontology turns out to be too limited.

Although its accepts that knowledge is a social construction, critical realism at the same time insists that its subjectivist epistemology does not have the relativist implication of social constructivism, that is, that discussing the validity or invalidity of theories makes no sense because knowledge is a 'mere' social construction, and hence, a subjective matter only. Critical realism claims that it can escape this relativism by combining a subjectivist epistemology with an objectivist ontology, videlicet a subjectivist view of knowledge with the *ontological-independence thesis* that reality exists independently of thought.[25] By this ontological-independence thesis realists mean that the being of reality ('existence', 'that') and the way reality is ('determinacy', 'what', 'quality') are independent of human cognitive processes, concepts, theories, and so on, which we employ in knowing reality. In the terminology used in what follows, this means that reality is independent of 'our thought'.

Why is the objective ontology, in the form critical realism proposes it as a solution, problematic? The problem resides not so much in the points that critical realism adduces against positivism and social constructionism—the problem is rather the determinacy of the ontology of critical realism itself. First and foremost, we have to discuss the epistemological question of the justification of that ontology, thus, its form (a).[26] Although, according to critical realism, organizations cannot be reduced to discursive practices, I shall discuss the ontology problem in an epistemological setting, for it is the ontology of critical realism, a cognitive practice, that I want to problematize. After all, we know what we know about reality (for example about organizations) only in and through our knowledge. From the epistemological point there follows, secondly, an ontological point concerning the content of this ontology (b).

(a) If the reality of structures and mechanisms is independent of 'thought', as critical realists claim, then the question is: how do we know anything about this reality? It is certainly not observable. We do not mean to pose this question in a methodological sense (the answer of critical realism would then be:

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25   Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory*; Johnson and Duberley, *Understanding Management Research*, chap. 7; Ackroyd and Fleetwood, 'Realism'.

26   Cf. C. Krijnen, 'Realism and the Validity Problem of Knowledge', in C. Krijnen and B. Kee (eds.), *Philosophy of Economics and Management & Organization Studies: A Critical Introduction* (Deventer: Kluwer, 2009), pp. 237–64 and C. Krijnen, 'On Idealist Foundations of Reality: The Forgotten Perspectives of Neo-Kantianism', in H. de Regt and K. Chunglin (eds.), *Building Bridges: Connecting Science, Technology and Philosophy*. Essays Presented to Hans Radder (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2014), pp. 189–201.

via 'retroduction') but in a fundamental, logical sense. To understand the question correctly, we have to go into the scientific concerns of critical realism.

According to critical realists, human behavior can only be explained via non-empirical structures ('essences', 'causal powers', or 'capabilities') which are themselves real. These structures make up the foundation of empirical events. Scientific knowledge should be concerned with these foundational structures and mechanisms, which have to be, to exist, to be real for empirical phenomena to be and to behave in the way they are and do. Despite the view that knowledge is a construction, critical realism holds on to the idea that this construction refers to a reality that exists independently of thought.

Why is this *reference to a reality that is independent of thought* important? Because otherwise, as is the case for social constructivism, the *claim that knowledge is objectively valid* can no longer be understood or accounted for. Hence, to understand the *validity* of empirical knowledge, an appeal to a non-empirical reality of structures and mechanisms is required. Thus the *standard*, that which delimits the social construction that is knowledge, is *reality*. In this respect, critical realism is no different from positivism: whereas according to positivism observational data are the touchstone of our knowledge of reality, for critical-realists this touchstone consists in a non-perceptible reality of structures and mechanisms. It has an *explanatory* function for knowledge.

This means that the question about mechanisms and structures arises from an *epistemological* context. This epistemological context concerns both the problem of *relativism* and the resulting lack of validity, as well as the *function* that this deeper reality has for scientific explanations. In both cases a problem of *validity* is at stake—the problem of realism is primarily a problem of validity: how can the validity of knowledge be understood in a different way than positivism and social constructivism propose? This is a central question for critical realists such as Bhaskar,[27] Reed,[28] and Ackroyd and Fleetwood,[29] as well as for moderate critics such as Johnson and Duberley.[30] Critical realists constantly stress the validity-theoretic context of their concern.

To be sure, critical realism rejects the correspondence theory of truth, which sets the standard for empiricism and positivism, as it cannot be squared with a subjectivist epistemology. However, critical realism holds on to an eminently important *presupposition,* which it has in common with the protagonists of the

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27   Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory*; R. Bhaskar, *Scientific Realism and Human Emancipation* (London: Verso, 1986).

28   Reed, 'Reflections'.

29   Ackroyd and Fleetwood, 'Realism'.

30   Johnson and Duberley, *Understanding Management Research*.

correspondence theory: reality exists independently of our thought and is the measure or validity criterion for our production of knowledge.

It is important to understand that the debate's central question is *epistemological* in nature: the question concerns the ground of the validity of knowledge. This is important because critical realists, particularly in elaborating their position, also concern themselves with matters of a *methodological* nature: they hold that social scientists ought to investigate the structures and mechanisms that determine social behavior and social relations. From the social-constructivist point of view, social structures are held to be the contingent results of discursive practices rather than the essential determinations of social phenomena; social constructivist research focuses on these practices, whereas little attention is paid to social structures as such. To pay attention to these structures would be a methodological consequence of the epistemological position of critical realism: the starting points of critical realism have important consequences for theory formation in the social sciences, that is, for its methodology. Social phenomena are founded in objective social structures, which make them into what they are. They cannot be determined in terms of *observable inductive behavioral patterns* (positivism) or in terms of *discursive practices* within which they occur (social constructivism). Instead, they should be determined in terms of *social structures* that, as causal powers, are the foundation of these social phenomena.

If this is indeed the case, then the following realist consideration stands to reason. Structures determine objects and their explanation. Therefore these structures cannot be fictions. They must be real. Consequently, a stratified ontology is required, for the theories and concepts of the sciences must be about something, must have a referent. That referent is real, which requires an epistemological foundation—the ontological independence thesis (OIT).

Now we see clearly, what the fundamental logical question posed above—'how do we know anything about this reality?'—aims at: if reality, as a ground of validity that is independent of thought, functions as a criterion, then it is *presupposed* that reality does indeed exist independent of thought; otherwise, it could not function as such a criterion for the validity of our knowledge. Hence, the validity of OIT is presupposed. The question now arises: can critical realism deliver sufficient arguments for this presupposition? Take note: OIT is a thesis, a statement concerning a certain state of affairs. Science does not allow just any old statements. Qua scientific statements, they require a justification of their validity. Is OIT valid? Does reality exist independent of thought?

Instead of going into details about arguments for OIT, I shall develop an argument that shows that realism has no arguments that suffice to ground OIT. It appears that social constructionism has a good point in emphasizing that

reality and subjectivity are closely connected. Against social constructionism, however, it proves to be the case that there is an objective meaning of subjectivity, which makes it possible to overcome the relativism of social constructionism criticized by critical realism and to establish a non-ontological objective measure for our knowledge claims. Reality is in a certain sense independent of our conceptualizations. This, however, is only half the story. Realism, which we here discuss in the form of critical realism, is in itself an unscientific position, as it is methodologically unable to justify its own foundations. At the same time, critical realism rightly does not give in neither to the relativist position of social constructivism nor to the exaggerated objectivism of positivism. The glory of critical realism consists in its epistemologically inspired search for a deeper foundation of reality; its misery is that it conceives of this foundation in a realist way, and is therefore unable to make good its own intentions.

Although contemporary philosophy of science has developed countless arguments to prove the validity of OIT, these arguments for OIT refer one way or another to thought instead of proving that reality is independent of thought. A detailed analysis shows that these arguments always already assume that OIT is valid. A *petitio principii* is involved, comparable with the insufficient reflection on their own knowledge claims that we encountered in Scott and in Hatch and Cunliffe. Just as in their case, the problem here is the result of not distinguishing different levels. The arguments meant to prove OIT employ an equivocal concept of 'thought' and therefore of 'independence'.

A valid demonstration of OIT is not possible as long as 1) the thesis concerns 'thought' in an unspecific sense and/or 2) a 'realist' argument, that is, some kind of empirical, ontic argument, in favor of this independence is advanced (an argument that does not refer to 'thought' but to 'reality' as the ground of this independence, in the way critical realism refers to existing social structures). We have to conceive of thought and (in)dependence in a differentiated way—that is say, we need to distinguish between thought *per se* and *our* thought.

In the meta-theoretical debate as it is being conducted between positivists, social-constructionists, and critical-realists, an equivocal concept of thought (and of independence) is used: the debate only is about our thought but at the same time continually appeals to thought per se. When we make this distinction, it becomes clear that reality is indeed dependent on thought per se, yet, independent of our thought. Therefore, the correctness of OIT cannot be proved with realist arguments. It can only be proved with arguments that concern the sense of thought about objects, that is to say, with arguments that refer to the concept of thought. Hence, the crucial point is the *meaning* of notions like thought, knowledge, and reality. The debate about OIT concerns

the relation between thought and reality: the epistemic (knowledge, cognitive) relation. In this debate, thought (knowledge, theory, etcetera) is opposed to thought: the claim of the realists, who advocate an objectivist ontology in the sense of positivism and critical realism, confronts the claim of the anti-realists or idealists, namely the social-constructionists, who advocate a subjectivist ontology. Any decision about the validity claim of the thought of the realist and that of the idealist can only be made and founded in the context of thought. Only through thought do we know what is the case: thought is the ground of all validity. Viewed in this way, thought is the Alfa and Omega of the debate.

As we have said, reality is not independent of thought per se, but it is independent of our thought. Reality is therefore both dependent and independent of the knowing subject—depending on what we mean by thought and by subject. Reality is, as reality, independent of the epistemic processes of concrete subjects, that is, of actually existing researchers. In this respect, the objectivists are right. Nevertheless, on a more fundamental conceptual level reality is dependent on the subject as principle of knowledge, that is to say, as the set of rules that concrete subjects have to satisfy if they correctly claim that they have valid knowledge: as the set of rules that therefore is the *foundation of all objectivity*. Hence, these rules are not social constructions of concrete subjects but defining moments of the knowledge claims of these subjects. If they are taken as social constructs, one misunderstands the validity claim connected with such a construction.

When the distinction is made between thought per se and our thought, the 'natural' expectation is confirmed that there is something like an 'objective' world that is independent of the subject. The world is certainly not ontically, or one can also say, 'empirically' dependent on our 'person'; the world cannot be reduced to discursive practices either. The 'natural' expectation is confirmed, however, by correcting the ground of that expectation. The ground turns out to be the subject or thought as principle of objectivity: a set of rules and therefore of structures of meaning that are the foundation of all objectivity—not a reality in the sense of critical realism.

From the perspective of the current meta-theoretical debate, thought/subject as principle of objectivity appears to be, so to speak, a 'meta-subjective' and 'meta-objective' thought/subject. It is neither a naturalistic nor a culturalist notion. Apart from thought there 'is', there 'exists', no 'world', no 'objectivity', no 'organization', no 'objectives', no 'means, no 'power, no 'leadership', no nothing—because such notions have no sense or meaning independent of thought. That is where social constructionism is right. However, the social constructionists subjectify thought when they view it as an actual, contingent, social, discursive, cultural, practice (see 'our' thought) and therefore ignore its

objective, logical meaning or structure, resulting in the well-known problems of normativity and validity. And just as nothing exists independent of thought, nothing can be proved, derived, or otherwise demonstrated in a theoretically relevant way independent of thought. Everything that 'is' in a theoretically meaningful way, is characterized by a relation to thought; it is 'defined' by that relation at a fundamental level. What cannot be thought, cannot *be*: conceivability is a condition of the possibility of anything to exist. Even when we claim that reality is independent of thought, that claim is a proposition of thought: independent of thought, nothing can be thought.

The fact that thought is the foundation of the possibility of reality does not affect the real character of that reality: what becomes apparent is that 'reality' itself is a determination of thought. Real states of affairs remain real, whether we think them or not. In spite of this, it is inconceivable that something is completely independent of thought, for when it is thought as independent, it is already (an object of) thought, thus, dependent on thought. We can never think away thought, at least if we think the matter through sufficiently. Everything that is, is determined by thought in its possibility; it has, as a possible object, the determinacy of being conceivable. Conceivability is a condition of being.

In short: OIT is too indefinite to be meaningful, and as a general claim it is even invalid. We have to distinguish thought as a *principle* (condition of the possibility) of objectivity from our thought that *claims* to have knowledge. If we keep the objective sense of thought in mind, it is clear that thought is thought of being, that the unthinkable, the inconceivable, cannot be, that nothing can be thought independent of thought, that being has no theoretically understandable meaning independent of thought, and that without the objective sense of thought 'our' thought cannot even be 'thought'.

(b) However, if thought is presupposed in any possible meaning, the ontology of critical realism becomes a free-floating subjective construction without an objective correlate. The independence of thought and reality should not be proved in a realist way. In contrast, it should be proven starting from the concept of thought qua objective thought, qua thought of objects. The higher-level social structures that critical realism refers to are themselves *possible objects of thought*; according to critical realism, they are even the proper objects of organization theory. This brings us to the mentioned point concerning the *content* of an ontology of organization. What does the inextricable connection of thought and reality imply for our problem of the original determinacy of the subject matter 'organization' and therefore of the ontology of organization theory? It means that the determinations of the content of that ontology, that *what* organization is, must be developed from determinations of thought and therefore from more fundamental determinations than those of real social

structures. As a result, the ontology of organization studies has a 'logical' foundation: determinations of an organizational ontology acquire their meaning and their final justification from logical determinations, from determinations of thought—ontological determinations, too, are determinations of thought.

Critical realism tries to explain observable social practices, such as organizational practices, on the basis of overarching social structures, ultimately on the basis of the socio-economic context in which organizations function. Nevertheless, also these structures are 'real' structures, and hence, possible objects of thought: what is their meaning as the possible objects of thought that they are? Within the framework of critical realism, the meaning of these structures remains implicit: how are they themselves 'defined'? What, for example, is a 'society'? Are there more general structures than socio-economic structures, and if so, what is their nature and their connection with the lower-level structures? Can real structures, such as that of a society, be the last horizon of determination? Do they not, as possible objects, have a relation to thought? What sort of relation is this, and what does this relation imply for their meaning?

An ontology that takes its origin from determinations of thought into account is capable of developing an all-embracing concept of organization as a possible object of the theories of organization studies. Such an all-embracing concept of organization can form the basis of an integration of the multiplicity of perspectives on organization that play a role in organization studies.

4   Conclusion: Towards a New Meta-Perspective for Organization Studies

The solution for the problems that we have diagnosed is to be found in a continuation of the line of reasoning developed here, that is, in an ontology developed on the basis of thought. Our exploration of organization theory began with a reflection on thought, namely with an analysis of the factual claim of organization theory that it possess (scientific) knowledge of organizations. In the analysis of that knowledge claim of organization theory it appeared that organization is a fundamental concept, a framework concept, of organization theory. In the context of that concept, organization theories are developed. Organization theories are always theories about organization. This implies that the meaning and validity of the concept of organization is *presupposed* as the starting point and aim of knowledge of organization theories. On the basis of this presupposition organization theories try to determine the content of the concept of organization.

As we have seen, the *non-philosophical* disciplinary attempts at justification of this presupposed meaning and validity of the concept of organization offer no solution. It is actually not part of the task of non-philosophical scientific disciplines to focus on the determinacy and the validity of their framework concepts. They rather determine their subject matter *within* that framework: their research method aims at the determination of the content of that subject matter, not at the determination of what it means to have a subject matter as subject matter (just as there is a difference between making a work of art and reflecting on the meaning art). Framework concepts, on the other hand, are expressly the objects of philosophical research. The search for the determinacy and validity of the conceptual framework within which our experience acquires meaning is a philosophical quest. Non-philosophical scientific disciplines and philosophy are intrinsically intertwined. A philosophical justification of organization studies is implicit in the claim of organization studies to produce knowledge. In this claim, fundamental concepts, most importantly the concept of organization itself, play a determining role.

The *philosophical* justification developed in the debate about the foundations of organization studies within organization studies themselves is not a solution either. Critical realism does indeed show that positivism and social constructionism are inadequate. The ontology of critical realism, however, is inadequate as well. In itself there is nothing peculiar about this inadequacy: in all sciences there are after all good and not so good theories. None of the three dominant positions in the meta-theoretical debate acknowledges the all-embracing significance of thought as principle of objectivity, as it was presented in the above criticism of critical realism.

It is within the framework of such a theory of thought that we should determine the concept of organization so as to be able to justify it scientifically. Thus, the concept of organization, that is the point of departure of organization theory, will become supported by arguments. When that is done, the concept of organization is no longer a diffuse or dogmatic starting point. To the contrary, the starting point of organization theory shows to be a well-determined terminal point of more fundamental philosophical reflections.

In these more fundamental philosophical reflections it will have to become apparent that, and in what sense, the concept of organization is *a necessary presupposition of understanding ourselves and the world in which we live.* Such a concept of organization would be objectively valid; it would be valid for anybody who claims to have knowledge of organizations (or of whatever else) and binding for any organization theory as a theory about organization. By implication, it would transcend the diversity of concepts of organization that currently exists in organization studies.

How such a concept of organization is to be developed in detail is an extremely difficult problem. On the one hand, we can easily see that, for example, the concept of an object (in the sense of the subject matter of research) is presupposed by any organization theory. It is a necessary concept of knowledge—not because we have investigated empirically that knowledge is always about something, but because the concept of an object is clearly part of the *meaning* of knowledge: knowledge is the thought of a thinking 'subject' that produces 'thoughts' about an 'object', knowledge consists in the thoughts of a thinking something (subject) about something (object). Insofar thought is knowledge, thought of objects, thought of…., it differentiates itself at a fundamental level of its own determinacy, that is of its own structure, into (among others) 'subject', 'thought', and 'object'. Hence, it differentiates itself into notions that independently of each other are meaningless, that acquire meaning only in relation to each other: they are not entities existing independent of each other.

On the other hand, however, it is much less easy to see how the concept of organization is part of our self-understanding and understanding of the world, and thus part of thought. The methodological guideline, yet, is clear: if we can show that and how the concept of organization is part of this understanding, then we have solved our problem of the concept of organization presupposed in organization theories, at least at a fundamental level. Such a concept of organization would transcend all diversity as it would make up the basis of that diversity *as* diversity of organization. It goes without saying that we cannot develop this concept of organization without adopting organization theory as the starting point of philosophical reflection. The knowledge claim of organization theory and the concepts operative in it constitute both the problem and the material to be understood philosophically, that is, to be understood with the help of, and in terms of, philosophical concepts. In view of our analysis we can say at least that these philosophical concepts have to be concepts of a philosophy that attempts to render thought explicit as the principle of objectivity, methodologically and qua content.

If this is the case, then we have achieved nothing less than a *new systematic philosophical perspective* on organization. Viewed historically, however, the new perspective has its roots in a perspective that is older than the three perspectives dominant in organization studies (positivism, social constructionism, and critical realism). It is a perspective that was developed by German idealist philosophy. From a systematic point of view, German idealist philosophy—as it was initiated by Kant, transformed by Hegel and further developed by the neo-Kantians, by phenomenologists like Husserl and his successors, and by contemporary philosophers like Hans Wagner and Werner

Flach—does not play any significant role in the foundational debate about organizational ontology. It is important to note, however, that the urge to address German idealism, as it has paradigmatically taken shape in classical German idealist philosophy, resulted from a critical reflection on the ontology of critical realism. This reflection on realism lead us to idealism and its relevance for a contemporary philosophy of organization. The reason for the impasse of the foundational discourse in organization studies is indeed that the perspective of German idealist philosophy is insufficiently exploited in the analyses of the problems and in developing solutions concerning the foundations of organization. Classical German idealist philosophers like Kant and Hegel not only offer a more comprehensive conception of thought, subjectivity, and objectivity than the dominant meta-perspectives. As a result, they also offer extremely detailed, although insufficiently explored and underestimated concepts for including spheres of reality in a philosophical foundation (some famous examples: the spheres of knowledge and science, morality, law and state, art, religion).

That German idealist philosophy actually does not play a significant role in the debate is not very surprising: the domain of organization (in the sense of organization studies) is terra incognita in idealist philosophy in its historical form. In spite of that, from a systematic point of view, the philosophy of organization could benefit enormously if it managed to integrate German idealist philosophy. With regard to the foundations of organization studies, the dominant meta-perspectives on theory formation have to be supplemented, not to say, modified, as the relevance of the perspective of German idealist philosophy needs to be analyzed, introduced, and integrated into the debate in a productive way. Exploring the relevance of German idealist philosophy for the development of an up-to-date ontology for organization studies seems to offer a conceptual way out of the dead-end-streets of positivism, social constructionism, and critical realism.

Therefore, instead of ending with philosophical answers about what organization is, in light of the present state of organizational ontology that we have criticized, it is much more important to pose the right questions to German idealist philosophy, if it is to function as a new meta-perspective for organization studies. These question should aim at an outline of a new organizational ontology. This outline primarily concerns the fundamental features of the concept of organization itself: *the very idea of organization.* In exploring this idea, several topics current in the contemporary debate on the foundations of organization, and beyond, need to be addressed. These topics concern, for instance, the following:

- What is the task of a philosophy of science, especially a philosophy of organization studies?
- What is the relevance, as regards this task, of the distinction between, what are called in the present debate, 'epistemology' and 'ontology', so important for German idealist philosophy too?
- What is the relevance of the idea of a 'system' of philosophy for the determinacy of organization?
- What position and what rank characterizes 'organization' in such a system as it will, of course, contain more than just the sphere of organization?
- Organization is a specific configuration of culture. Referring to the sciences that study these configurations, the social sciences, we call it a 'social' phenomenon: What are social phenomena? And what specifies organization as a social phenomenon?
- How can we conceive of organization within an idealist social ontology?
- What basic determinations of organizational phenomena should an ontology of organization bring to light?

Towards an Idealist Social Ontology—Criticisms and Challenges

In line with the concluding remarks and questions in chapter one, chapter two aims to delineate the idealist approach most suitable for tackling the problem of social ontology. The first section reveals approaches that do not intrinsically build on philosophies of classical German idealism as introduced by Kant and developed further by German idealists like Fichte, Hegel, and the neo-Kantians. The second section elaborates on recognition theory as the most prominent position adopted by those trying to rejuvenate German idealism, in particular Hegel's philosophy. Moreover, recognition theory attempts to transform the concept of recognition into a new paradigm of philosophy. In the course of this intriguing attempt, it becomes apparent that essential and still relevant features of German idealist philosophy are abandoned, as sections three and four will further specify. Therefore, the subsequent sections five, six, and seven will set out challenges to an alternative appropriation of classical German idealism for developing an up-to-date social ontology.

1 Beyond Naturalism, Collective Intentionality, and Phenomenology

Contemporary social ontology takes as its starting point the question of whether, and if so under what conditions, social objects are exempted from being reduced to natural objects. Instead of naturalizing social objects, such objects can be shown to possess properties and structures which are not reducible to nature. As a consequence, the social sciences differ from the natural sciences in respect to their objects. With this starting point, contemporary social ontology grasps and articulates an issue, within the context of analytical philosophy and its methodology, which has been dealt with since the rise of the social sciences at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.

Although scattered remarks by Wilfrid Sellars in the sixties and seventies on 'shared intentions'[1] stimulated some authors to elaborate on this subject

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1 Cf. W. Sellars, 'Imperatives, Intentions, and the Logic of "Ought"', in H.-N. Castañeda and G. Nakhnikian (eds.), *Morality and the Language of Conduct* (Detroit: Wayne State University

matter, it was especially the suggestion of John Searle to lay the foundations of social ontology in the concept of 'collective intentionality' that initiated a lively and ongoing world-wide debate on the basic characteristics of sociality.[2] Searle's *naturalistic* stance concerning normativity in general and social normativity in particular, however, leads to a philosophical approach for determining and justifying the subject matter at stake that differs radically from an idealist approach.[3] Whereas Searle's naturalism is related to philosophical *realism*, for an idealist ontology, the 'idea', 'reason', 'thought', the 'subject' (in the sense of idealism) makes up the foundation of reality (in the sense of realism); hence, idealism is held to obtain the foundation of any possible naturalistic approach.[4] This, of course, is another way of saying that from the perspective of idealism, social ontologies following naturalist and realist conceptions of

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Press, 1963), pp. 159–218; W. Sellars, *Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes* (London, New York: Routledge & Paul; Humanities Press, 1968); W. Sellars, *Essays in Philosophy and its History* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1974); W. Sellars, 'On Reasoning about Values', *American Philosophical Quarterly* 17 (1980), 81–101.

2   Cf. J. R. Searle, 'Collective Intentions and Actions', in P. R. Cohen, J. L. Morgan and M. E. Pollack (eds.), *Intentions in Communication* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1990), pp. 401–15; J. R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (London et al.: Lane, 1995); J. R. Searle, *Making the Social World: The Structure of Human Civilization* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); M. Gilbert, *On Social Facts* (London, New York: Routledge, 1989); Meggle G. (ed.), *Social Facts & Collective Intentionality* (Frankfurt/M. et al.: Hänsel-Hohenhausen, 2002); H. B. Schmid, *Wir-Intentionalität: Kritik des ontologischen Individualismus und Rekonstruktion der Gemeinschaft* (Freiburg: Alber, 2005); H. B. Schmid, K. Schulte-Ostermann and N. Psarros (eds.), *Concepts of Sharedness: Essays on Collective Intentionality* (Frankfurt: Ontos, 2008); R. Tuomela and K. Miller, 'We-Intentions', *Philosophical Studies* 53 (1988), 367–89; R. Tuomela, *The Importance of Us: A Philosophical Study of Basic Social Notions* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995); R. Tuomela, 'Joint Intention and Commitment', in G. Meggle (ed.), *Social Facts & Collective Intentionality* (Frankfurt/M. et al.: Hänsel-Hohenhausen, 2002), pp. 385–418.

3   See on the naturalistic stance and its problems more in detail C. Krijnen, 'Das philosophische Problem ethischer Grundlagen und das Grundproblem der evolutionären Ethik', *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 53 (1999), 77–100; C. Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn: Eine problemgeschichtliche und systematische Studie zu den Prinzipien der Wertphilosophie Heinrich Rickerts* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001).

4   The literature on the question 'realism or idealism?' is extensive. See, for instance, C. Krijnen, 'Realism and the Validity Problem of Knowledge', in C. Krijnen and B. Kee (eds.), *Philosophy of Economics and Management & Organization Studies: A Critical Introduction* (Deventer: Kluwer, 2009), pp. 237–64; C. Krijnen, 'On Idealist Foundations of Reality: The Forgotten Perspectives of Neo-Kantianism', in H. de Regt and K. Chunglin (eds.), *Building Bridges: Connecting Science, Technology and Philosophy*. Essays Presented to Hans Radder (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2014), pp. 189–201.

sociality fail to justify their own approach sufficiently qua philosophical comprehension of social phenomena. As a consequence, basic constellations of sociality remain unaddressed, underlying collective intentionality too.

Therefore, it is not without reason, and important to note, that within the contemporary debate, the perspective on sociality is indeed broadened by taking into consideration continental *idealist* approaches. In the current debate about an ontology for organization studies, the perspective of 'social constructionism' conceives of ontology within the framework of a theory of 'ideas', 'subjectivity', and the like.[5] However, from the perspective of idealist philosophy, following the line of classical German idealism, social constructionism, roughly speaking and notwithstanding its idealist aspects, is also a branch of realism (like positivism and critical realism). By contrast, Hans Bernhard Schmid, in introducing the idealist position of 'phenomenology', represents a major stream of thought in genuine philosophical debates on the foundations of sociality. Schmid is primarily concerned with discussing new dimensions of sociality by taking Heidegger's work into account.[6] The tradition of phenomenology, however, as introduced by Brentano and paradigmatically shaped by Husserl, constitutes a type of idealism that is noesis ('act')-orientated in nature, meaning that phenomenology understands objectivity from the acts from which objectivity results. Yet, it can be shown that the phenomenological framework itself is not able to deal comprehensively with the objectivity claims current in the human world[7]—in spite of all the illuminating phenomenological insights into this 'subjective' dimension of normativity and the impressive merits phenomenology has compared to approaches within the dominant discourse stemming from analytical theories of action. At least this diagnosis applies if we take classical German idealism as a standard.

In contrast to a noesis-oriented approach, noema ('content')-orientated idealist philosophies, like those of Kant, Hegel, or the neo-Kantians, are more promising. Classical idealist philosophers, in particular Kant and Hegel, offer highly elaborated concepts for including spheres of reality in a far and deep reaching philosophical foundation. The neo-Kantians have already tried to

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5   Cf. chap. 1.

6   Schmid, *Wir-Intentionalität.*

7   See for this in detail, C. Krijnen, 'Kants Subjektstheorie und die Grundlegung einer philosophischen Anthropologie', *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 62 (2008), 254–73; C. Krijnen, 'Gegenstandskonstitution bei Husserl und in der klassischen deutschen Philosophie: Eine problemgeschichtliche Deutungslinie', in F. Fabbianelli and S. Luft (eds.), *Husserl und die klassische deutsche Philosophie: Husserl and Classical German Philosophy* (Cham, Heidelberg, New York, Dordrecht, London: Springer, 2014), pp. 115–31.

introduce Kantian and Hegelian arguments into the debates of their time, while also being eager to determine, among other things, the foundations of the sciences. Contemporary transcendental philosophers like Hans Wagner or Werner Flach aim to continue this tradition of idealist philosophy (as we shall see). These noema-orientated idealist philosophies are characterized by a primacy of the objective dimension of validity, which does not exclude but integrates the subjective dimension of intentionality and actuality. Hence, they offer an encompassing foundation of rationality in which objectivity and subjectivity are reconciled.

2   Beyond Contemporary Philosophy of Recognition

Nevertheless, contemporary philosophy of recognition represents probably the most prominent direction that presently claims to introduce an updated version of classical German idealism into ongoing debates, including the debate on social ontology.[8]

Though it seems somewhat excessive to characterize the theory of recognition as a "well-established and mature research paradigm in philosophy,"[9] it cannot be denied that for the past couple of decades, there has been intensive debate about recognition which has commanded ever greater attention. This debate began with topics in practical philosophy, especially political and social philosophy. As it developed, however, recognition achieved such broad significance thematically and historically that a new philosophical paradigm

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8   For an overview, see H.-C. Schmidt am Busch and Zurn C. (eds.), *The Philosophy of Recognition: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Lanham et al.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010); concerning philosophy of recognition and social ontology, see H. Ikäheimo and A. Laitinen, 'Recognition and Social Ontology: An Introduction', in H. Ikäheimo and A. Laitinen (eds.), *Recognition and Social Ontology* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2011), pp. 1–21; on its appropriation of German idealism, see Krijnen C. (ed.), *Recognition: German Idealism as an Ongoing Challenge* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2014). The following paragraphs draw on my studies C. Krijnen, 'Recognition: Future Hegelian Challenges for a Contemporary Philosophical Paradigm', in C. Krijnen (ed.), *Recognition: German Idealism as an Ongoing Challenge* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2014), pp. 99–127, and C. Krijnen, 'Das Soziale bei Hegel: Eine Konstruktion in Auseinandersetzung mit der kantianisierenden Transzendentalphilosophie', in C. Krijnen and K. W. Zeidler (eds.), *Gegenstandsbestimmung und Selbstgestaltung: Transzendentalphilosophie im Anschluss an Werner Flach* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2011), pp. 189–226.

9   Cf. C. Zurn, 'Introduction', in H.-C. Schmidt am Busch and C. Zurn (eds.), *The Philosophy of Recognition: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Lanham et al.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), pp. 1–19, at p. 1.

does indeed seem to be in the making. Recognition appears to be a fundamental concept, relevant not only for understanding political issues but for our human world as a whole. As a result, the concept of recognition now includes such notions as subjectivity, objectivity, rationality, knowledge, personality, sociality, identity, otherness, nature, logic, etcetera. The protagonists in this debate seek to make German idealism fruitful for contemporary problems. Whereas neo-Kantians a century ago sought to update German idealism by focusing on 'Kant as the philosopher of modern culture',[10] contemporary theorists of recognition intend to rejuvenate Hegel's philosophy.[11]

This attempt to return to Hegel exhibits rather divergent interpretations of his philosophy, and a remarkable turning away from Hegel's mature system, as outlined in the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* of 1830. Hegel's philosophical project of developing self-knowledge of the idea through the three elements of pure thought, nature, and spirit appears to his critics just as unconvincing as, for example, his non-dialogical, monological, concept of rationality and normativity. By contrast, I shall argue that Hegel as a systematic philosopher confronts the contemporary paradigm of recognition with difficult and far-reaching questions concerning its own foundation, both methodologically and thematically. Consider first the following background considerations.

According to the protagonists of recognition, the principle of recognition is central to Hegel's practical philosophy in his Jena period, especially in his unpublished "Geistphilosophie" (1805/6) and *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807).[12] However, it can hardly be said that in these texts Hegel develops a comprehensive theory of recognition. Therefore, it is little surprise to find detailed, though independent attempts to interpret, for example, the *Phänomenologie*

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10   Heinrich Rickert published a book in 1924 with this telling title (H. Rickert, *Kant als Philosoph der modernen Kultur: Ein geschichtsphilosophischer Versuch* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1924)). The title, of course, suppresses how much of Hegel is effective in neo-Kantianism. See for Hegel and neo-Kantianism, C. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System: Prinzipientheoretische Untersuchungen zum Systemgedanken bei Hegel, im Neukantianismus und in der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008).

11   See as placeholders for many, A. Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit: Eine Reaktualisierung der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001); L. Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen der praktischen Philosophie Hegels* (München: Fink, 2010); P. Cobben, *The Nature of the Self: Recognition in the Form of Right and Morality* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2009).

12   See influential studies like L. Siep, *Anerkennung als Prinzip der praktischen Philosophie: Untersuchungen zu Hegels Jenaer Philosophie des Geistes* (Freiburg/München: Alber, 1979).

as the core of Hegel's theory of recognition.[13] Hegel's later philosophy, as published in his *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (1830) and the *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1821), does not seem to pay much attention to the principle of recognition (let alone the principle of mutual recognition). This is subordinated to other, more embracing principles. Hegel's later works are characterized by a relation to logic very different to his early works. This reflects a further important contrast. In his early works, Hegel, inspired by Kant, elaborated on something like 'practical philosophy'.[14] However, in the course of his intellectual development, Hegel criticized Kant's moral philosophy and philosophy of religion ever more radically. Hegel's mature views present a philosophy of *spirit* which seeks to overcome the opposition between theoretical and practical philosophy, or more precisely, from the start it *has already overcome* that opposition. Unlike Hegel, however, the protagonists of recognition conceive Hegel's philosophy of spirit as 'practical' philosophy; and 'Hegel's practical philosophy' indeed functions, in various permutations, as a popular book title.[15] In contrast, Hegel's *Enzyklopädie* conceives philosophy as philosophy of the *idea,* and conceives of spirit in its objective dimension not as practical but as *free* spirit, embedding the distinction between theoretical and practical in a new, more fundamental constellation of philosophy of spirit. It is essential to Hegel's mature philosophy (both in the *Logik* and in his philosophy of spirit) to overcome the traditional, pervasive, and influential distinction between theoretical and practical philosophy, and between the theoretical and the practical.

Hence, it is unsurprising that many theorists of recognition favor Hegel's early philosophy. They regard his mature philosophy either as insufficient for a philosophy of recognition, which must instead be developed, for example,

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13   See for instance Cobben, *Nature of the Self*, who, in order to hold his thesis, is forced to press the *Phänomenologie* into a different programmatic corset and to ascribe to this work a different place in Hegel's system.

14   See for the Kantianism of the young Hegel, for instance, M. Bondeli, *Der Kantianismus des jungen Hegel: Die Kant-Aneignung und Kant-Überwindung Hegels auf seinem Weg zum philosophischen System* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1997); H. F. Fulda, *G.W.F. Hegel* (München: Beck, 2003), part I; D. Henrich, 'Historische Voraussetzungen von Hegels System', in *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), pp. 41–72; Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen*, pp. 24–62.

15   Cf. e.g. Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen*; R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); E. Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System: Zu Grundmotiven von Hegels praktischer Philosophie* (München: Fink, 2005).

from the *Phänomenologie*,[16] or as requiring considerable modification to become relevant to contemporary philosophy. The first strategy can at best conclude that, from a systematic point of view, there is a continuity concerning the theme of recognition in Hegel's development. In order to determine this continuity, however, certain perspectives of the younger Hegel must guide the interpretation of Hegel's mature philosophy. This results in the view that Hegel's later philosophy is retrograde with respect to the *Phänomenologie*.[17] On the second strategy, Hegel's view that philosophy and its disciplines should be determined within the framework of a 'system' of philosophy, granting the *Logik* even a foundational and guiding role for a contemporary philosophy of recognition, is dismissed as 'metaphysical'.[18] Hegel is said to hold implausibly speculative, metaphysical premises, together with a corresponding teleological concept of history and a Euro and Christocentrism that simply fail in the face of today's multicultural society.[19]

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16   C. Halbig, M. Quante and L. Siep, 'Hegels Erbe—eine Einleitung', in C. Halbig, M. Quante and L. Siep (eds.), *Hegels Erbe* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004), pp. 7–19, at p. 10, too concur that in the contemporary debate about Hegel's heritage, the *Phänomenologie* is particularly central to efforts to revitalize Hegel's views for contemporary philosophy.

17   Cf. Cobben, *Nature of the Self.* Brandom is also fascinated by Hegel's *Phänomenologie.* Most notably he appreciates the tight connection between normativity and sociality, which according to him Hegel conceives in terms of mutual recognition; Brandom gives Hegel's philosophy a neo-pragmatist coating (cf. e.g. R. Brandom, 'Kantian Lessons about Mind, Meaning, and Rationality', *Philosophical Topics* 34 (2006), 1–20; R. Brandom, 'Sketch of a Program for a Critical Reading of Hegel: Comparing Empirical and Logical Concepts', *Internationales Jahrbuch des Deutschen Idealismus* 3 (2005), 131–61; R. Brandom, *Tales of the Mighty Dead: Historical Essays in the Metaphysics of Intentionality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002); R. Brandom, 'Some Pragmatist Themes in Hegel's Idealism: Negotiation and Administration in Hegel's Account of the Structure and Content of Conceptual Norms', *European Journal of Philosophy* 7 (1999), 164–89). Accordingly, he reads Hegel's text through (social-)subjectivist glasses, which do not seem to fit to Hegel's objectivist orientation. Brandom too must restrict the role of the *Logik* for the system of philosophy and modify Hegel's method of philosophical knowledge.

18   Cf. e.g. A. Honneth, 'Pathologien des Sozialen: Tradition und Aktualität der Sozialphilosophie', in A. Honneth (ed.), *Pathologien des Sozialen: Tradition und Aktualität der Sozialphilosophie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1994), pp. 9–69; Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit.*—Also M. Quante, *Die Wirklichkeit des Geistes: Studien zu Hegel* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2011), chap. 3, is very critical about Hegel's system.

19   Cf. Siep, *Anerkennung als Prinzip*; Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen*; L. Siep, 'Recognition in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit and Contemporary Practical Philosophy', in H.-C. Schmidt am Busch and C. Zurn (eds.), *The Philosophy of Recognition: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Lanham et al.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), pp. 107–27.

To get a grip on dealing with the problem of social ontology within a Hegelian setting, it seems opportune to specify these general considerations in two respects. The first is Hegel's concept of philosophy as a science of the absolute idea and its non-metaphysical character (3). This concerns the programmatic profile of Hegel's philosophy and, therefore, is relevant in regard to the coming chapters too. Moreover, it provides the basis for the second respect: showing that Hegel's philosophy is not practical philosophy (4).

3   Speculative Idealism, Not Metaphysics

Let me now consider critically from a Hegelian perspective one very important presupposition of the present recognition debate. This presupposition concerns the relation between metaphysics, logic, and the system of philosophy. Another influential presupposition, which I will only touch on, concerns the place of the *Phänomenologie* in Hegel's philosophical system.

3.1   *Metaphysics, Logic, and the System of Philosophy*

Metaphysics can be conceived of as fundamental knowledge transcending nature, or our experience of nature, insofar as metaphysics is about the basic, systematic structure of our concepts and their interconnections, which we presuppose in thinking about objects, and the ontology implicit in our conceptual scheme, which makes possible our thought of objects. This influential conception of metaphysics, however, is insufficient for understanding metaphysics within German idealism: German idealism is guided by a more determinate concept of metaphysics, based upon the distinction between a *metaphysica generalis* and a *metaphysica specialis*. Moreover, for Kant as for Hegel, metaphysics has both a *thematic*[20] and a *methodic* determination,[21] according to which metaphysics is dogmatic insofar as it fails to reflect critically upon its own foundations. Due to Kant's critical analysis of metaphysics, and from the

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20   For instance that metaphysics is about "supersensible" (*übersinnliche*) objects, capturing conceptually objects "in themselves" (*an sich*), the "essence" (*Wesen*) of things.

21   Irrespective of whether metaphysics is described as a type of knowledge, lacking "critique" (*Kritik*), as Kant puts it (see the prefaces and introduction of his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*), or, as Hegel puts it, as an "attitude of thought towards objectivity" that merely consists in the "*perspective of understanding* towards objects of reason" (*Verstandes-Ansicht der Vernunft-Gegenstände: Enz* § 27), which in a "naïve way" (*Enz* § 26) supposedly obtains knowledge of its objects but, in fact, only sells "the determinations of thought as the fundamental determinations of things" (*Enz* § 28; cf. *I* pp. 46 f.).

perspective of the history of philosophy, Hegel brands metaphysics as "former metaphysics."[22] Although Hegel seeks to surpass Kant's transcendental philosophy through his speculative idealism, he does not restore metaphysics against Kant's intentions.[23]

Instead of reviving pre-Kantian metaphysics, in Hegel's speculative idealism the science of logic supersedes pre-Kantian but now superfluous metaphysics.[24] By conceiving of logic as the "genuine" metaphysics,[25] Hegel gives metaphysics a thematic and methodic significance very different to its pre-Kantian predecessors.[26] At the same time, Hegel deviates from Kant's transcendental concepts of general and special metaphysics. For Hegel, metaphysics should not take its determinations as determinations of "substrates," gathered from "representation"; instead, it considers the "nature" of the determinations of thought and their "value" as such (*an und für sich*).[27] In this context, Hegel states what is methodologically essential: that in philosophical knowledge the "nature of the content" itself "moves." Hence, the content itself "posits" and "generates" its determination.[28] Such a logic in no way constitutes a

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22   *Enz* § 27.

23   As Fulda has shown in detail: H. F. Fulda, 'Ontologie nach Kant und Hegel', in D. Henrich and R.-P. Horstmann (eds.), *Metaphysik nach Kant?* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1988), pp. 44–82; H. F. Fulda, 'Die Ontologie und ihr Schicksal in der Philosophie Hegels: Kantkritik in Fortsetzung Kantischer Gedanken', *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 53 (1999), 465–84; Fulda, *Hegel*; H. F. Fulda, 'Der letzte Paragraph der Hegelschen "Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften"', in H.-C. Lucas, B. Tuschling and U. Vogel (eds.), *Hegels enzyklopädisches System der Philosophie: Von der "Wissenschaft der Logik" zur Philosophie des absoluten Geistes* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2004), pp. 481–506.

24   Cf. *I* p. 46 with *Enz* § 24.

25   *I* p. 5.

26   For P. Stekeler-Weithofer, *Philosophie des Selbstbewusstseins: Hegels System als Formanalyse von Wissen und Autonomie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2005), p. 155, Hegel makes an "ontological turn," leading from the "critique of knowledge" (i.e. Kant) to a "critical ontology of meaning" (*sinnkritischen Ontologie*: Ibid., p. 153). Such ontological readings of Hegel *nolens volens* pave the way for ontological misinterpretations of Hegel: as a critical ontology of meaning, ontology is no longer what it used to be as an ontology. Quante, *Wirklichkeit des Geistes*, pp. 23 f., 29, 31 f., 84, etcetera, too reads Hegel's theory of rationality, including the logic, as an ontology. Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, certainly considers Hegel's *Logik* to represent a fine example of bad metaphysics.

27   *I* pp. 46 f.

28   Ibid., p. 6.—This also entails a different conception of critique compared to Kant's conception of critique as a foundation of (a transcendentalized) metaphysics. See on this C. Krijnen, 'Kritik', in C. Bermes, U. Dierse and M. Hand (eds.), *Schlüsselbegriffe der Philosophie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2015), pp. 267–82.

pre-Kantian metaphysics but a logic of the (absolute) idea, namely a logic that evolves itself through an immanent process of determination, beginning with thought as the indeterminate immediate ('being', *Sein*) and completing this evolution by comprehending its own evolution ('absolute idea'). This self-movement of the 'concept', and with that the development of the relations between the determinations of thought (*Gedankenbestimmungen*), must of course be a justified movement: the self-movement occurs in the 'form of necessity'.[29] Already this suggests that, according to Hegel, philosophy has only one content and object: the idea, more precisely, the absolute idea,[30] i.e. the "concept which comprehends itself" (*sich begreifende Begriff*),[31] the "absolute truth and all truth."[32] Therefore, the idea is not a being (*Seiendes*). Instead, the absolute idea proves itself to be the method, i.e. the processuality proper to the determinations of pure thought, treated in the *Logik*, together with the system of these determinations of thought. So conceived, philosophy does not plague itself with substrates of representations, or any other 'pre-given'; the absolute idea contains all determinacy within itself.[33]

Containing all determinacy in itself, the idea is not exhausted merely as a logical idea. Taking the whole of philosophy into account, the absolute idea is addressed by Hegel in three perspectives of determination: within pure thought, within nature, and within spirit.[34] Hence, Hegel's philosophical program includes nature and spirit, i.e. the realms of reality; his philosophy includes them in the way of an immanent development of the idea which acknowledges 'experience'.[35] Here, the logic functions as the "foundation" of any natural or spiritual determination.[36] Because of its radical foundational role, Hegel qualified the logic as both the "first" and the "last"

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29   *Enz* § 9.

30   *II* p. 484.

31   Ibid., p. 504.

32   *Enz* § 236; cf. *II* p. 484.

33   Ibid., p. 484.

34   See for this and what follows: Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 4.2.1.2.

35   Immanent development is meant here as a methodological qualification. As far as the content is concerned, speculative idealism, according to its self-understanding, is committed to the 'fruitful bathos of experience' (Kant). Hegel leaves neither the empirical dimension nor the history of philosophy aside: he acknowledges empirical and philosophical knowledge as material, but he (trans)forms this material to conform with the knowledge claim of his speculative philosophy and the methodology belonging to it. Cf. Ibid., pp. 190 ff.

36   *II* p. 224; cf. *TWA* 8, § 24, A 1. Hegel denotes the logic also as the "pure figure" (*reine Gestalt*) of the "intellectual view of the universe" (*I* p. 31) as well as "inner figurator"

science of the system of philosophy.[37] This implies, inter alia, that each and every determination—whether empirical determinations or philosophical determinations of nature and spirit constituting the foundations of the empirical—has its basis in logic, while at the same time the logic is retained in the other realms of the philosophical system as their foundation. Finally, at the end of the system, the logic becomes a logic that *comprehends itself* as a logic that is the unity of nature and spirit, and, therefore, is the grounding principle of reality. By reaching this insight, philosophy—a figure (*Gestalt*) of the absolute spirit—comprehends itself as truly a science of foundations, or conversely, as truly a science of totality.[38]

Such a comprehension apparently can only be accomplished within a system of philosophy. For Hegel, philosophy without a system cannot be scientific knowledge. Actually, the truth is the whole, "concrete" only as internally developing itself while at the same time functioning as the principle of unity: philosophy is "essentially" a system.[39] This holds for the whole of philosophy as well as for its parts: we are always dealing with 'circles rounded and complete in themselves'. The whole of philosophy, then, forms a "circle of circles" in which each circle functions as a "necessary moment."[40]

Although Hegel is time and again criticized for neglecting 'experience', a closer look shows that the opposite is the case: Hegel integrates experience. He acknowledges what in terms of neo-Kantianism could be called the 'fact of culture', videlicet a set of actualized validity claims, as a starting point for

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(*inneren Bildner*) and "pre-figurator" (*Vorbildner: II* p. 231) of his philosophy of reality (*Realphilosophie*).

37 Ibid., p. 437.

38 See for the logic as the last science Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 4.2.3, esp. pp. 228 ff. The absolute spirit is, however, not just "the spirit which *knows* that it has to appear in the finite life that Hegel conceives of as *world history*" (A. Kok, *Kant, Hegel, und die Frage der Metaphysik: Die Möglichkeit der Philosophie nach der kopernikanischen Wende* (München: Fink, 2013), chap. 6.8.3). This type of "transcendental openness" does not cover Hegel's mature concept of absolute spirit. Absolute spirit entails a specific closure of spirit too; Hegel thinks openness and closure together in such a way that this unity is not only a "unity of spirit and nature" but a unity of the idea, nature, and spirit. From the perspective of the history of philosophy, philosophy is a particular (*jeweilige*) knowledge of totality (cf. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 4; C. Krijnen, 'Hegel und das Problem der Abgeschlossenheit des philosophischen Systems', in H. R. Yousefi, H. Oosterling and H.-J. Scheidgen (eds.), *Von der Hermeneutik zur interkulturellen Philosophie*. FS H. Kimmerle (Nordhausen: Bautz, 2010), pp. 135–53).

39 Cf. *Enz* §§ 14 ff.; *PG*, pp. 19 f.; *TWA* 4, 411.

40 *Enz* § 15; cf. *II* p. 504.

philosophical reflection. Hegel's conceptual arsenal not only results from an intensive struggle with the history of philosophy. The recourse to something available is necessary from a genetic-methodological point of view too. Hegel's *Logik* can be understood as a philosophical 'reconstruction' of principles or meanings that have been brought to light in the history of philosophy: it preserves "former logic and metaphysics" and transforms them,[41] hence, bearing upon the history of philosophy as its material.[42] The philosophy of nature has nature as its topic and therefore the idea in "the form of otherness."[43] The development of its concept follows the procedure determined and complied within the logic: its fashion is posing the presupposed, making the implicit explicit, hence, determining what is initially indeterminate. Whereas the logic underlies the condition of, so to speak, utter presuppositionlessness, the philosophy of reality needs to start with presuppositions of contents that have to be made explicit in the course of the process of conceptual determination. Hegel's philosophy of reality makes up a complex of logical development and 'outward presentation (*Darstellung*)'.[44]

The presuppositions of content that play a role at the beginning(s) of the philosophy of reality concern the initial (opening) concept, videlicet the concept a philosophy of a particular sphere has to start with. The initial concept of the philosophy of nature itself is supplied in a scientifically justified way by the logic. Similarly, the initial concept of the philosophy of spirit itself is supplied in a scientifically justified way by the philosophy of nature. Both philosophies of reality start with a given concept (given, of course, within a systemic setting, hence, not 'merely' given) that 'realizes' itself in a methodologically regulated way: the 'logical' and the 'existing' dimension of the concept merge in the idea (as the concept that corresponds with itself in its objectivity). The presuppositions of content at the beginning of the philosophy of nature and of spirit are to be understood as an 'exposition': as a preliminary determination of nature respectively spirit *as such.* This preliminary determination characterizes the particular sphere of objectivity to deal with in the philosophy of reality (nature, spirit).[45]

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41   *Enz* § 9.

42   See also Hegel's conception of the history of philosophy (cf. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, pp. 252 ff.).

43   *Enz* §§ 247, cf. § 18.

44   By contrast, the "realization" of the logic as consideration 'in-and-for-itself' of thought takes places in the "same," i.e. the logical, sphere (*II* p. 505).

45   On the notion of exposition, see chap. 5.1.

What does this inclusion of material mean for determining reality philo-sophically? The initial concept of a sphere of reality includes on the one hand the *logical* dimension. In this respect, nature is determined as "the idea in the form of otherness";[46] spirit again has nature "as its presupposition."[47] On the other hand, the dimension of *existence* (*Dasein*) of the concept is included in the speculative consideration of philosophy (the way in which the idea gives itself existence).[48] As a consequence, the specific *content* of the philosophy of reality comes into the conceptual contemplation of philosophy, that is the "point of view of the concept" (*Betrachtungsweise des Begriffs*)[49] or the "com-prehending consideration" (*begreifende Betrachtung*).[50]

At the beginning of the philosophy of nature, Hegel accordingly addresses not only humans' 'practical' and 'theoretical' behavior regarding nature but states explicitly that empirical physics is presupposed for the emergence and development of philosophy. It is, however, presupposed only from a genetic-methodological perspective, as the foundation of philosophy cannot consist in "appealing to experience": it consists in the "necessity of the concept."[51] Philosophy does not leave the empirical content (and our empirical knowledge of it) aside but acknowledges and uses it.[52] The "emergence of philosophy" has "experience" as a "starting point"; thought lifts itself above the "natural, sensuous, and clever argumentative consciousness" into the "sheer element of itself." Likewise the "empirical sciences" are in need of a philosophical foun-dation, picking up their content, yet elevating it into "necessity";[53] and meta-physics too is included by Hegel.[54] They all supply material for a philosophical construction.[55]

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46   *Enz*, § 247.

47   Ibid., § 381.

48   Whereas in the logic the concept is thematic 'in-and-for-itself'.

49   Ibid., § 245.

50   Ibid., § 246.

51   Ibid., §§ 245 f., esp. 246 N.

52   Ibid., § 9 N.

53   Ibid., § 12.

54   Ibid., §§ 246, 378.

55   This reveals another problem of Honneth's approach: How does his idea of an indirect reactualization of Hegel fit to Hegel's philosophy of the history of philosophy? After all, Hegel (*v* 6, pp. 43–53) is very critical towards attempts to reactualize former philosophies. However, as Honneth eschews Hegel's idea of foundation as well as of a system of phi-losophy, at least according to Hegel's standards, Honneth's reactualization can hardly be labelled as a reactualization of Hegel's philosophy.

In conclusion, regarding Hegel's programmatic conception of philosophy, I see no reason to side with theorists of recognition who, in making Hegel's philosophy of right relevant today, argue that for "methodological" reasons, Hegel's argumentation fails because it rests on his logic, which purportedly is fully unintelligible to us due to its "ontological" concept of spirit.[56] However, a vague reference to the "theoretical and normative conditions of the present age"[57] hardly suffices for such a far-reaching estimate of Hegel's logic. On the contrary, any interpretation of Hegel's concept of objective spirit that neglects its relation to Hegel's system of philosophy, neglects essential determinations of Hegel's concept of philosophy.[58] Hegel himself understands his *Rechtsphilosophie* as an elaboration of his philosophy of objective spirit.[59] Accordingly, he also notes that the *Rechtsphilosophie* borrows its method from the *Logik*:[60] the *Logik* plays a fundamental role for the *Rechtsphilosophie*, both as such and concerning its specific content. The elaboration of the *Rechtsphilosophie* follows the developmental process of self-knowledge of the absolute idea as absolute spirit.[61] In accord with the logic

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56   Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, pp. 12 ff.

57   Ibid., pp. 13 f.

58   By contrast, for Honneth (Ibid., pp. 14 f.) it is important that the "genuine" (*eigentliche*) substance of Hegel's philosophy of right can be provided by an account of objective spirit that does not refer to Hegel's system of philosophy.

59   *Enz* § 487 N, cf. §§ 483–552; *Rph* § 2.

60   Ibid., § 2 N with § 31. Generally, Hegel's two philosophies of reality regard their object as necessarily conforming to the "self-determination of the concept" (*Enz* § 246).

61   Hence, as a spirit that has *not* been reached within the philosophy of objective spirit. Objective spirit is a *finite* spirit, that is to say, not a cognitive *self*-relation. Only in absolute spirit is a figure of knowledge reached "in which knowing reason [is] free for itself" (Ibid., § 552). The concept of spirit, and hence, also the concept of the absolute idea, is actualized only with the concept of absolute spirit.—Cobben, *Nature of the Self*, pp. 137, cf. 143, is surprised that regarding absolute spirit there is a considerable difference between Hegel's *Phänomenologie* and his *Rechtsphilosophie*: in the latter, absolute spirit plays no role on the level of social institutions. This absence of the absolute spirit, however, fits well to Hegel's program of philosophy as self-knowledge of the absolute idea as absolute spirit: it results from the function absolute spirit has within Hegel's system of philosophy. That is why—pace Cobben (Ibid., p. 148)—Hegel does not conceive of right and morality as "*objective* and *absolute* spirit." Right and morality are both figures of objective spirit because they are, unlike the absolute spirit, not forms of self-knowledge of spirit as spirit. For Cobben (Ibid., pp. 8, cf. chap. 7–9), the "logical structure" of the *Rechtsphilosophie* cannot be understood without considering Hegel's intention to connect the epochs of European history with corresponding forms of the self. In his *Enzyklopädie*, however, Hegel himself takes a different tack. Whereas for Cobben (Ibid.,

of a speculative development of concepts, the beginning of the philosophy of objective spirit must concern a concept of spirit that is maximally extrinsic to the concept attained by subjective spirit: 'right' (*Recht, ius*, justice).[62] Hegel overcomes the outwardness of the idea within objective spirit by realizing (*realisieren*) this concept of right: by making explicit the abstract generality of that concept as the beginning of series of meanings.[63]

3.2 The Phänomenologie *in Hegel's Philosophical System*

The philosophical system outlined by the mature Hegel, oriented towards self-knowledge of the idea, also entails the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* being demoted as a paradigm of philosophy. This demotion not only concerns the introductory function of the *Phänomenologie*[64] but also the (partial) integration of this work into the *Enzyklopädie*. This is a relevant issue, as in

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p. 116) the *Rechtsphilosophie* is to be understood as an elaboration of the rationality developed in the *Phänomenologie*, within Hegel's system of philosophy the *Rechtsphilosophie* is an objectivation of free spirit, i.e. of the final stage of subjective spirit. Here, Hegel shows that and how spirit can be a knowing spirit, both theoretically and practically: Spirit must be a free spirit, a spirit that "knows" and "wants" itself as free (*Enz* § 482). Such a spirit is autonomous in the sense that it can determine itself. It is free, yet, pre-social and pre-individual, as sociality and individuality (of subjects) play no role prior to the philosophy of objective spirit.

62 More precisely, abstract right as the *existence* (*Dasein*) *of freedom* in the form of possession. According to Hegel's concept of right, the concept of right, as existence of the free will that has freedom as its "inner determination and goal", must be actualized in an "external pre-given objectivity," so that the concept is perfected as "idea" (Ibid., §§ 483 f.). At the beginning of this process, the subjectivity of free spirit does not manifest itself in a free spirit but in an external matter (*äußerlichen Sache*) in which "I" put my "will" (Ibid., §§ 488 f.). Cf. C. Krijnen, 'Metaphysik in der Realphilosophie Hegels? Hegels Lehre vom freien Geist und das axiotische Grundverhältnis kantianisierender Transzendentalphilosophie', in M. Gerhard, A. Sell and L. de Vos (eds.), *Metaphysik und Metaphysikkritik in der Klassischen Deutschen Philosophie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2012), pp. 171–210.

63 Cf. *II* pp. 488 ff. with 241. Against this background of Hegel's conception of philosophical justification, the justificatory status of "social pathologies," extremely important to Honneth (Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, pp. 16 f., 49 ff.; A. Honneth, 'Sozialphilosophie', in S. Gosepath, W. Hinsch and B. Rössler (eds.), *Handbuch der politischen Philosophie und Sozialphilosophie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), pp. 1234–41), is just as problematic as Honneth's conception of philosophical foundations of reality.

64 Cf. in detail Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, pp. 59 ff. with 90 ff., and Krijnen, 'Recognition', pp. 106 ff.

contemporary recognition discourse the *Phänomenologie* plays a dominating role in rejuvenating Hegel's thoughts.

When the *Phänomenologie* appeared, for Hegel it had the function of an introduction within the system of science, especially in its foundational discipline: in the logic.[65] Whereas Hegel first conceived of the *Phänomenologie* as the first part of the system, later the *Phänomenologie* no longer functioned as an introduction to, or the first part of, the system.[66] Hegel even excludes the *Phänomenologie* from the order of the system, insofar he integrates essential parts of the *Phänomenologie* into the philosophy of subjective spirit in the *Enzyklopädie*. In addition, the *Enzyklopädie* obtains a new introduction,[67] and the logic of the *Enzyklopädie* even an introduction of its own.[68] The 'Phänomenologie' within the system outlined by the *Enzyklopädie*, certainly does not have the task of introducing us into philosophy. Hegel sometimes writes of the *Phänomenologie* as a superfluous introduction into his logic,[69] though he never fully gave up the introductory role of the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (he retains it even in the second edition of his *Seinslogik* of 1832):[70] non-philosophical consciousness (*natürliches Bewußtsein*), undoubtedly, retains its right to be led to the standpoint of speculative philosophy.

Furthermore, the *Logik* is capable of justifying itself: the "concept of science" results *from* the *Logik* itself.[71] On top of that, the determination of the method of philosophy is *part* of the *Logik*, whereas the *Phänomenologie* transpires only to be an "example" of this method.[72] Although the *Phänomenologie* might serve as a possible route to the *Logik*, it is not constitutive for the *Logik*

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65   Cf. *I* pp. 7 f.

66   See, for example, W. Bonsiepen, 'Einleitung', in H.-F. Wessels, H. Clairmont and W. Bonsiepen (eds.), *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1988), pp. IX–LXIII, at pp. L ff., and W. Jaeschke, *Hegel-Handbuch: Leben—Werk—Schule* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003), pp. 180 (§ 6), about the place of the *Phänomenologie* in Hegel's intellectual development.

67   *Enz* §§ 1–18.

68   Ibid., §§ 19–83.

69   According to Hegel, Ibid., § 78 N, an introduction via the route of a self-completing skepticism—that is the route of the *Phänomenologie*—is "unpleasant" and "superfluous."

70   Cf. G. W. F. Hegel, *Die Lehre vom Sein (1832)*, G. W. F. Hegel, Gesammelte Werke (Hamburg: Meiner, 1990), Band 21, hrsg. v. Gawoll, Hans-Jürgen; Hogemann, Friedrich, pp. 9 (footnote); *I* pp. 29 ff., 53; cf. the note to the second edition of the *Phänomenologie* (*PG* p. 448).

71   *I* p. 29.

72   Ibid., p. 35.

in the sense of a necessary condition for its standpoint.[73] The section 'With What must Science Begin?'[74] makes clear that the *Phänomenologie* cannot serve as the beginning of the *Logik*: the opposition between consciousness and object (as well as that between thematized ('for it') and thematizing ('for us') consciousness), constitutive for the *Phänomenologie* as an introduction, contains too many presuppositions. Science must begin with (pure) 'being' (*Sein*), regardless of whether one reaches the *Logik* by the *Phänomenologie* or by what Hegel calls a 'decision' or 'resolution' (*Entschluß*).[75]

A closer look at the 'Phänomenologie' within the *Enzyklopädie*[76] would show significant differences to the *Phänomenologie* of 1807, substantiating the thesis that Hegel has downgraded the *Phänomenologie*. For my argument in this chapter, however, it suffices to reveal the different embedding and focus of the development.

The *Phänomenologie* of 1807 aims to examine appearances of true knowledge in order that subsequent forms of its appearance introduce natural consciousness into a scientific philosophy as pure, comprehending knowledge.[77]

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73   Kok, *Metaphysik*, chap. 4.2.1 f., is of a different opinion. Concerning Hegel's system, Kok takes the *Phänomenologie* to be necessary for introductory and foundational reasons. However, Kok's argumentation considers neither Hegel's elaborations of the self-foundational capacity of the *Logik*, nor Hegel's remarks about the deficient argumentative (called *räsonieren*) and historical character of 'introductions' (cf. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, pp. 62 f.). T. S. Sparby, *Hegel's Conception of the Determinate Negation* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2015), chap. 7.1 ff., does not really reflect on the beginning as the beginning of philosophy and with this as the beginning of a logical process of (self-)determination of (self-)comprehending thought. Houlgate's idea that Hegel conceives of thought as a form of "intellectual intuition" (S. Houlgate, 'Der Anfang von Hegels Logik', in A. F. Koch, F. Schick, K. Vieweg and C. Wirsing (eds.), *Hegel—200 Jahre Wissenschaft der Logik* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2014), pp. 59–70, at p. 59; S. Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's 'Logic': From Being to Infinity* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2006), pp. 125 ff.; S. Houlgate, 'Schelling's Critique of Hegel's "Science of Logik" ', *Review of Metaphysics* 53 (1999), 99–128, at pp. 119 ff.) seems not to do sufficiently justice to the fact that for Hegel objective thought has overcome the opposition between intuition and discursivity and that the beginning of the *Logik* concerns the beginning of a process of self-determination of comprehending thought (which, as the beginning of a process of determination, is nothing but indeterminate immediacy). Cf. on the issue of the beginning of thought Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chaps. 1–3.

74   *1* pp. 51–65.

75   Ibid., pp. 52–4.

76   *Enz* §§ 413–439.

77   Hegel presents the program of the *Phänomenologie* mainly in the Introduction (*PG* pp. 53–62). For recent literature, see, for instance, Fulda, *Hegel*; H. F. Fulda, ' "Science

This introduction departs from the basic opposition of Hegel's time: the opposition between subjectivity on the one hand and that which restricts this subjectivity on the other, the *subject-object dualism.* The paradigmatic figure of this opposition, both for common sense and for philosophy, is *consciousness.*[78] At the end of the history of its education or cultivation (*Bildung*), in "*absolute knowledge,*"[79] consciousness has overcome subject–object dualism. The appearing knowledge becomes actual, that is to say, it becomes philosophical knowledge. This knowledge, then, is developed in the system of philosophy; the *Phänomenologie* concludes with only an immediate knowledge of the absolute. In the system of philosophy, this absolute proves itself to be the *absolute idea.* For Hegel, the absolute idea is the only theme of philosophy. Hence, philosophy is "presentation of the idea."[80] The *Phänomenologie*, however, only concerns consciousness, that is, a specific aspect of the idea, as a case of application of the philosophical method. In his *Enzyklopädie*, Hegel treats consciousness in this narrow sense. Consciousness is part of the philosophy of the idea and obtains its specific profile within that philosophy. Not in the encyclopedical phenomenology but in psychology, hence, in the philosophy of the properly[81] subjective dimension of spirit, we comprehend what knowledge is: an endeavor of the free spirit, both theoretical and practical.[82]

4   Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit is Not Practical Philosophy

For Kant, the concepts of science and of system are closely related. Architectural unity constitutes the scientific character of our knowledge,[83] also within philosophy. Kant develops his philosophy accordingly,[84] following Aristotle's[85]

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of the Phenonomenology of Spirit": Hegel's Program and its Implementation', in Dean Moyar and Michael Quante (eds.), *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 21–42.

78   Hegel's *Phänomenologie*, therefore, is shaped as a "science of consciousness" (*PG* p. 61), that is a science of "knowing as it appears" (Ibid., p. 434).

79   Ibid., pp. 422–33.

80   *Enz* § 18.

81   Hegel occasionally characterized his psychology as "genuine doctrine of the spirit" (*II* p. 437).

82   *Enz* §§ 440 ff.

83   *KrV* B 860.

84   Cf. chap. 4.

85   Cf. Aristoteles, *Die Nikomachische Ethik*, übers., eing. u. erläut. v. O. Gigon (Zürich, München: DTV, 1991), VI 2–4, I 1; 1095a5 f.; X 6–7, and Aristoteles, *Metaphysik* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1994), I 2.

influential division of philosophy into theoretical and practical philosophy or into the realms of nature and of freedom. The original unity of these two branches, however, was a major challenge to German idealists, not least to Hegel.[86] Nevertheless, theoreticians of recognition, such as Siep or Honneth, according to their own self-understanding, elaborate a practical philosophy,[87] purportedly, *Hegel's* practical philosophy.

This practical impetus of contemporary theory of recognition is unsurprising, as the discourse about recognition was (and is) largely motivated by politics, human rights, democracy, globalization, economization, and multiculturalism, hence, by socio-political matters.[88] In that connection, though, one rather would have expected, at least programmatically, a turn to Kant's presently much debated, and highly vaunted, practical philosophy, especially his *Critique of Practical Reason* and his *Metaphysics of Morals*. Yet, to many

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86   Cf. chapter two and Krijnen, 'Recognition'.

87   As indicated, Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, pp. 17 f., 41, 44, characterizes Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit as practical philosophy, understands the philosophy of objective spirit as ethics, moral philosophy, philosophy of right or ethical theory of legal right (Ibid., pp. 20 f., 31 f., 53), takes the free will to be a moral principle (Ibid., pp. 34, note 16), etcetera. Siep dealt in many studies with Hegel's "practical philosophy"; recently, he tried to sound out its "limits and actuality" (Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen*). In the terminology of Hegel's mature works, he means by practical philosophy Hegel's philosophy of "objective spirit" (L. Siep, 'Einleitung', in *Aktualität und Grenzen der praktischen Philosophie Hegels* (München: Fink, 2010), pp. 11–22, at p. 14). Quante, *Wirklichkeit des Geistes*, too interprets Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit in terms of practical philosophy.—Also beyond the discourse of recognition, it is common to talk about Hegel's practical philosophy or ethics, compare, for example: A. Peperzak, *Hegels praktische Philosophie: Ein Kommentar zur enzyklopädischen Darstellung der menschlichen Freiheit und ihrer objektiven Verwirklichung* (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1991); D. Stederoth, *Hegels Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes: Ein komparatorischer Kommentar* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001), p. 387; K. Düsing, 'Politische Ethik bei Plato und Hegel', *Hegel-Studien* 19 (1984), 95–145; K. Düsing, 'Ethik und Staatslehre bei Plato und Hegel', in *Subjektivität und Freiheit: Untersuchungen zum Idealismus von Kant bis Hegel* (Stuttgart-Bad-Canstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2002), pp. 236–49; H. Schnädelbach, 'Der objektive Geist', in H. Drüe, et al (ed.), *Hegels "Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften" (1830): Ein Kommentar zum Systemgrundriß* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), pp. 289–316, at pp. 289 ff.; H. Schnädelbach, *Hegel zur Einführung* (Hamburg: Junius, 1999), pp. 120 ff. Recently, A. Buchwalter, *Dialectics, Politics, and the Contemporary Value of Hegel's Practical Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2010), and K. Vieweg, *Das Denken der Freiheit: Hegels Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (München: Fink, 2012) published on Hegel's 'practical philosophy'. Unfortunately, the standard translation of Hegel's *Sittlichkeit* is 'ethical life'.

88   See, for instance, the work of Habermas, Honneth, Taylor, and Fraser.

theorists of recognition, Kant's views appear inferior to Hegel's. They raise the standard arguments against Kant's practical philosophy. Hence, the individualistic and contractual account of his theory of justice seems inadequate for understanding social relations. Furthermore, Kant's empty ethical formalism should be overcome by a Hegelian idea of substantial ethical life, just as Kant's atomistic and monologic concept of reason is said to lead to a deficient concept of subjectivity because the subject is essentially social.

This farewell to Kant would require a study of its own, far beyond the scope of the present chapter.[89] Hegel, without doubt, engaged seriously with Kant's architecture of reason. To develop his concept of philosophy as a speculative doctrine of the *absolute* idea, Hegel needed not only to sublate the restrictions of both theoretical knowledge within the idea of the truth and practical knowledge within the idea of the good;[90] he also had to sublate the opposition between the theoretical and the practical operations of the spirit into a doctrine of free spirit.[91] The terminus of Hegel's philosophy of subjective spirit and starting point of his philosophy of objective spirit is indeed *free* spirit as a unity of theoretical *and* practical spirit. Whoever treats Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit as a practical philosophy, should explain what then Hegel's theoretical philosophy is: Is it the logic, the philosophy of absolute spirit, the philosophy of subjective theoretical spirit? Is it parts of these or a combination?[92] Should, by contrast, the philosophy of objective spirit not primarily be understood from Hegel's concept of spirit, and, hence, consider the concept of the practical as determined within the context of the concept of spirit? Whoever seeks to understand it in another way, or who reads, for example, the philosophy of spirit as 'ethics', should make explicit *his or her own* understanding of what 'practical' and 'ethical' mean—most likely taken from the history of philosophy—and justify *this* understanding in the context of *Hegel's* philosophy, before characterizing Hegel's philosophy by such concepts. Hegel's philosophy of spirit certainly offers formal and substantive points of contact for practical philosophy and for ethics beyond Hegel's own views, but Hegel's philosophy of spirit is neither of these.

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89   D. Loose, 'Kantian Version of Recognition: The Bottom-Line of Axel Honneth's Project', in C. Krijnen (ed.), *Recognition: German Idealism as an Ongoing Challenge* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2014), pp. 165–89, addresses some elements concerning Honneth.

90   *II* pp. 429 ff.

91   *Enz* §§ 445 ff.

92   Halbig, Quante and Siep, 'Einleitung', pp. 14 f., use the opposition 'theoretical—practical' without hesitation to assess Hegel's relevance. Accordingly, they do not consider what Hegel's theoretical philosophy would be.

A closer examination of the idea, widespread in the recognition discourse, that Hegel has a 'practical' philosophy would make clear that and why Hegel does not have one, and indeed that it would be a real challenge for the protagonists of recognition to show how a genuine practical philosophy is possible within the framework of Hegel's speculative system.[93] Instead of pursuing practical philosophy, Hegel intends to overcome the opposition between theoretical and practical philosophy from within and to sublate it in a higher, more original unity.[94] For Hegel, 'practical' philosophy is a deficient form of knowledge, inadequate to his concept of philosophy. Consequently, it is not a basis of any of the disciplines of his philosophy of reality (*Realphilosophie*). On the contrary, Hegel replaces it with a structure that, as absolute idea, is the truly scientific perspective of knowledge and, as free spirit, provides a conception of the subject that is able to actualize its purpose, freedom, within an externally found objectivity. Hegel's philosophy of reality is developed on the level of the absolute idea. Accordingly, the idea of knowledge in the philosophy of spirit is from the start construed in terms of the absolute idea. To grant parts of the philosophy of spirit an independent status, for instance (self-)consciousness, practical spirit, or objective spirit, neglects the idea that within Hegel's philosophy of spirit—unlike in his philosophy of nature—the stages of conceptual development do not exist for themselves: spirit's determinations and stages are "essentially only moments, conditions, determinations of the higher stages of the development,"[95] which are organized according to the absolute idea.

Consequently, the claims of the theoretical and of the practical as such, and, hence, also those of this influential, traditional division itself, lead to more fundamental, more encompassing concepts such as those of the absolute idea and the free spirit. As early as in his early writings, Hegel sought to overcome the opposition between freedom, subjectively understood, and nature, understood as an instrument of, or an obstacle to, freedom, through a concept of freedom designed to reconcile what is divided. Nature too must be conceived of as a manifestation of the idea. Thus, nature is conceived of as something determined by principles that subsume and subordinate the theoretical and practical conceptions of nature, by conceptualizing nature itself as freedom

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93   Cf. Krijnen, 'Recognition', pp. 109 ff.

94   See for Hegel's Frankfurt period, for instance, L. Siep, *Der Weg der "Phänomenologie des Geistes": Ein einführender Kommentar zu Hegels "Differenzschrift des Geistes"* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), pp. 29 f., and for the *Phänomenologie* P. Cobben, 'Anerkennung als moralische Freiheit: Grundmotive in der Phänomenologie des Geistes', *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 116 (2009), 42–58.

95   *Enz* § 380.

in Hegel's sense: as being with oneself in one's other. Furthermore, freedom is the basis of theoretical and practical spirit and of their relation, whereas they remain conceived dualistically within the contexts of the ideas of truth and of the good. Their dualism is superseded by Hegel through the transition from the logical idea of knowledge to the absolute idea, and it does not recur in the development of subjective spirit. Hegel's system of philosophy (strictly speaking, his *Phänomenologie des Geistes* too, in which stages of consciousness as appearing knowledge lead to the *Logik*) addresses theoretical and practical knowledge, including their objects, though, not from *their own* perspectives. Correspondingly, Hegel's system of philosophy provides neither practical knowledge nor theoretical knowledge; instead, it comprehends these types of knowledge speculatively within his system of philosophy.

It would be a real challenge to the contemporary paradigm of recognition to figure out what, then, practical philosophy can be within the framework of Hegel's mature philosophy. Kant's project of practical philosophy—namely a philosophy from the perspective of the practical, not from the absolute idea—is, in view of the practical-societal concerns of contemporary recognition theory, too important to dismiss, even if one is dissatisfied with Kant's execution. Is such a practical philosophy possible within Hegel's mature philosophical system? If so, where, and how would it look? Would it be able to develop its genuine practical impetus within speculative philosophy? What roles would Hegel's doctrines of the logical idea and of subjective spirit play? Truly intriguing questions!

5   Updating Idealism: A Methodological Guideline for Approaching Social Ontology

Instead of elaborating on future philosophies of recognition—it would certainly be fascinating to develop a tenable one—another idealist approach for updating German idealism regarding social ontology needs to be sketched. This approach will guide the coming chapters, which deal with essentials of the construction of a social ontology and the idea of organization. Recognition, though in a different version, will keep playing an important role too, as one of the historical movements we shall have to deal with consists of South-West neo-Kantianism. This branch of philosophy is famous for, among others, transforming the concept of recognition into a paradigm of philosophy, while also reshaping the idea of a system of philosophy against the backdrop of criticisms

of Hegel, current until today.[96] Concerning the problem of social ontology, South-West neo-Kantianism and its aftermath will become relevant if we want to understand sociality in Hegel. Why is this so?

In order to answer this question, several aspects should be taken into consideration. In the first instance, these aspects circle around the original determinacy or objectivity of the social and its philosophy, social philosophy, itself—at least, if we take German idealism as a standard for the foundational effort a truly scientific philosophy has to undertake. Honneth, who pretends to actualize Hegel's philosophy of right, may serve as a typical case again.

Drawing on the tradition of social philosophy, Honneth comes to the conclusion that social philosophy is essentially about determining and discussing negative developments and dysfunctions in society, that is to say, "social pathologies."[97] However, constructing the task of social philosophy in conformity with the idea of social pathologies apparently presupposes the concept of the social in its original determinacy and validity. Moreover, the history of social philosophy itself can only be addressed as a history of addressing social pathologies if the idea that social philosophy is a philosophy of social pathologies is itself a well-founded idea.[98] A sufficient foundation of sociality and social philosophy, however, can only be established on the basis of the concept of philosophy itself. Nevertheless, Honneth, among many others, abandons the idea of radical foundation based on the 'concept'. He is one of many that criticize the idea of a *radical foundation* (*Letztbegründung*). It seems, however, that, notwithstanding this ubiquitous criticism, the idea of a radical philosophical foundation contains contents that are insufficiently taken into consideration by the antagonists. Particularly significant for radical foundation is that science organizes itself "only through the proper life of the concept."[99] And it is likewise significant that *thought* in its determinacy as a principle is comprehended as the basis for thought in its concrete shape—hence, that thought is in itself the principle of any objectivity, making objective meaning possible.[100]

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96 Cf. Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*; Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*; C. Krijnen, 'Anerkennung, Wirklichkeit und praktische Vernunft im Neukantianismus', in C. Graf and H. Schwaetzer (eds.), *Das Wirklichkeitsproblem in Metaphysik und Transzendentalphilosophie: Heinrich Barth im Kontext* (Basel: Schwabe, 2014), pp. 15–51; Krijnen, 'Recognition'.

97 Honneth, *Pathologien des Sozialen*; Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*; Honneth, 'Sozialphilosophie'.

98 Also see the analogous case of 'organization' in chap. 1.2.3.

99 *PG* p. 38.

100 See W. Flach, *Grundzüge der Erkenntnislehre: Erkenntniskritik, Logik, Methodologie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1994), for a contemporary version of the idea of radical foundation as well as for the criticism of that idea.

Philosophy is the science par excellence of foundation: the science that gets to the bottom of any claim of objectivity, including its own claim: philosophy is universal and radical self-reflection.

An accompanying effect of abandoning the idea of a radical foundation is the abandonment of the idea of a *philosophical system*: of the thought that human self-understanding and human understanding of the world humans lives in can only be developed scientifically within a system of philosophy, hence, within a whole of determinations that is organized by grounds and consequences. Like the idea of radical foundation, the idea of a philosophical system also dominated modern philosophy for a long period, especially, and in a sublimated form, the tradition of German idealism. Hegel's philosophy may count as the most extreme model of the idea of a philosophical system, both regarding its form and its content. It says much that Honneth—expressly trying to reactualize Hegel's social philosophy and convinced that the contemporary relevance of Hegel's philosophy of right is underestimated—sticks to a "methodological" objection against Hegel's philosophy of right: Honneth dislikes Hegel's argumentation being tied to his *Logik*. For this reason, Honneth writes, Hegel's argumentation fails "methodologically": Hegel's *Logik* purportedly is fully unintelligible to us due to its "ontological" concept of spirit.[101] However, the underdetermined reference to something vague as the "theoretical and normative conditions of the present age"[102] is certainly not sufficient to substantiate Honneth's far-reaching estimate of Hegel's *Logik*. Nevertheless, Honneth is convinced that for productively appropriating Hegel's philosophy of right for contemporary issues, Hegel's methodological orientation towards the *Logik* and its ontological concept of spirit should be abandoned.[103] Concerning the "proper substance" of Hegel's philosophy of right, it is extremely important to Honneth that Hegel's concept of objective spirit can be interpreted *without* relating it to his system of philosophy.[104]

The foregoing eventually encumbers us with a task: *to take the idea of a philosophical foundation itself as the standard for determining the foundations of sociality.* Fulfilling this task requires a re-orientation towards the tradition of German idealism—German idealism offers the topical, methodical, and systemic paradigm for determining the social.

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101   Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, p. 12.
102   Ibid., pp. 13 f.
103   Ibid., pp. 12 ff.
104   Ibid., p. 15.

6 Sociality as a Phantom in German Idealism

6.1 *The Rise of the Social in the Nineteenth Century*

Without doubt, in some respects the commitment to German idealism for establishing the social seems plausible, especially, when we take for instance Kant's practical philosophy or Hegel's philosophy of right into account. A closer look, however, shows that linking German idealism and sociality is highly problematic—the concept of the social, as we know it as the subject matter of the social sciences, is a phantom here. That is to say, the concept of the social traditionally belongs to the domain of 'practical philosophy', particularly political philosophy, including philosophy of law and the state, and moral (ethical) philosophy.[105] 'Socialitas' is a basic concept in the rationalist tradition of natural law; the social also has a practical connotation in social contract theory (see for instance Rousseau's *contrat sociale*) and in the context of moral philosophy (see for example 'social virtues' in British empiricism). The social as a genuine, independent, specific realm of meaning only became a concept for theoretical determination in the course of the nineteenth century. The traditional link between the social and the practical was detached. Along with the development of the social sciences, the following question arose: What is the specific objectivity of the social, that is, of the subject matter of the social sciences? At the end of the nineteenth century, the debate about the concept of the social was in full swing. Stammler, Lehmann, Dilthey, Spranger, Scheler, Durkheim, and Weber were some of its important contributors, coming up with important theoretical determinations of the social. These determinations were, however, highly contested and marked by a significant degree of heterogeneity. Nevertheless, this historical constellation indicates that the concept of the social, as the basic social-ontological concept of the social sciences, cannot just be picked up from the philosophies of German idealism. On the contrary, it must be constructed on the basis of German idealist conceptions of philosophy.

This is also true for the more general notion of a social philosophy, irrespective of whether the beginnings of social philosophy are located in the German reception of French socialism, or if the decisive moment of its early history is positioned at the end of the nineteenth century with Stammler, Simmel, and Stein. Both variants also result in highly contested determinations and, again, are marked by a significant degree of heterogeneity. Recent work does not succeed in overcoming this confusion. There are numerous conceptions of what

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105   See, for instance, K. Röttgers, *Kategorien der Sozialphilosophie* (Magdeburg: Scriptum, 2002), pp. 25 ff., for a history of 'social' and 'social philosophy'.

social philosophy is or should be. Hence, it is not only social reality which has been neglected in the history of philosophy, being treated at best within the context of studies into politics, law, or morality; social philosophy also comes into being in the course of the nineteenth century. Regarding German philosophy, social philosophy more and more received the role of a "residual discipline" (Honneth), sometimes operating as a parent organization of practical philosophy, sometimes profiled as a normative addition to empirical sociology, then again as a diagnosis of present times. Anglo-Saxon philosophy, influenced by utilitarianism, comes to an understanding of social philosophy that is approximately equal to what is called in German philosophy 'political philosophy'; it shrinks here to one of its subdivisions which focuses in particular on normative questions concerning the role of the state for the maintenance of a civil society (property, punishment, medical care, etcetera).[106] In French philosophy, by contrast, it is unusual to name a subdivision, or even a whole discipline of philosophy, *philosophie sociale*: in French philosophy the issues dealt with in Germany under the cloaking title *Sozialphilosophie* are mostly addressed under *philosophie morale* or *philosophie politique.*

In conclusion, what social philosophy is, its subject matter, its method, remains obscure. Given the diversity of the meaning and the fact that its use is taken for granted, we cannot but undertake the effort to give the mere name 'social' (or 'social philosophy') a real, objective validity. This involves considering how concepts should be introduced at all in philosophy.

Seen from the perspective of a history of the problems of philosophy (*Problemgeschichte*), the social (and social philosophy) is younger than the philosophy of German idealism. This is why the concept of the social needs to be constructed, hence, *justified* in its basic meaning. For us, the problem arises of how to construct the social from the philosophy of German idealism. Thus, the linkage between the pursued project of establishing sociality philosophically and German idealism can only have a *methodological* character.

6.2   *Sociality and Practical Philosophy*

The appeal to German idealism becomes even more complicated because in this philosophy socio-philosophical topics are discussed within the context of what is called *practical philosophy*. In this respect too, the social is not addressed as an independent realm of meaning. Kant, for instance, models his philosophy following the old distinction between theoretical and practical reason. He consistently divides philosophy into theoretical and practical parts,

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106   Cf. Honneth, 'Sozialphilosophie', p. 1234; D. Horster, *Sozialphilosophie* (Leipzig: Reclam, 2005).

and divides their respective domains into those of nature and freedom. Fichte problematizes this architectonic of the system of transcendental philosophy, and it is Hegel who sees very clearly that the division 'theoretical–practical' is deficient: it is based on more original constellations. Accordingly, Hegel divides the system of philosophy into logic and philosophy of reality (nature, spirit), conceiving of practical phenomena as phenomena of the spirit. Social reality is a reality of the spirit. Hence, unlike in Kant's philosophy, Hegel determines social phenomena not primarily in the context of relationships of law and virtue. Nevertheless, Hegel too conceptualizes the realm of spirit that most scholars take to be central for Hegel's 'social philosophy'—the realm of objective spirit—as a realm of right, although of right in an all-embracing sense. The concept of the will is a fundamental concept here. Hegel addresses self-determination primarily in terms of the will and discusses the objectification of the free will in terms of right qua existence (*Dasein*) of freedom.

At first sight, Hegel's focus on the will might feed the impression that Hegel too is *ethicizing* the philosophy of spirit. After all, he determines free intelligence, which is the point of departure of the philosophy of objective spirit, not only as (free) 'will' but also as 'right'[107]—a figure which typically belongs to 'practical' philosophy and that Hegel even bases on a concept (the will) that since Kant has been the basic concept of moral philosophy. Hence, the objective reality of reason seems to have a 'mere' practical profile, instead of making up an encompassing concept of reason in its objective existence, an encompassing concept that, like for instance in neo-Kantianism and the like, might even be specified in terms of a plurality of 'cultural realms'. Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit is certainly conceptualized as 'philosophy of right', the existence of the free will generally determined as "right."[108] Even at the start of this philosophy, Hegel notes that a rational (*vernünftig*) will is caved in the subjective will as mores (*Sitte*),[109] and he soon starts talking about "rights" and "duties,"[110] discusses "property," as well as other themes that traditionally belong to the philosophy of right and of the state, though in a modified and radically new way of foundation. In short, at first sight we are dealing with a specific dimension of human self-formation, even identifying the objectification of freedom with relations of right.

On second sight, however, a different, more complex picture arises, as the relations within Hegel's system of philosophy have to be taken into account,

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107   *Enz* §§ 483 ff.

108   Ibid., § 486.

109   Ibid., § 485.

110   Ibid., § 486.

in particular the role the logic plays. This concerns the logic of the advancement of a speculative development of concepts as well as its relevance for the philosophy of reality. This constellation also concerns the concept of right as an encompassing concept for actualizing freedom, hence, the determinacy of right as a functional moment of the self-knowledge of the idea. I shall address this issue at a later stage. Presently it suffices to acknowledge that Hegel's philosophy of spirit, especially his philosophy of objective spirit, destroys the common division 'theoretical–practical' and offers a new structure for comprehending reality philosophically. Kant, despite a number of initial approaches, does not develop an encompassing concept of freedom that is able to function as the unity, hence as the basis, of theoretical and practical reason (respectively nature and freedom)—freedom continuously prevails as practical freedom. Hegel, by contrast, develops a concept of freedom that establishes a pervasive concept of freedom which underlies any of its specifications, regardless of whether the freedom of the will, freedom of action, logical freedom, esthetical freedom, etcetera. In Hegel, we find a broad concept of freedom as self-determination. In addition, Hegel extensively criticizes the distinction (opposition) between theoretical and practical reason and supplies us with an innovative alternative doctrine of the realization of spirit in its objectivity. Hegel's philosophy of spirit encompasses the realms of theoretical and practical philosophy, and hence, relativizes Kant's architectonic of philosophy. Freedom even encompasses all of Hegel's system of philosophy: it belongs to Hegel's conception of the speculative concept. Here we are dealing with a truly all-embracing and fundamental concept of freedom.

6.3   *Hegel's Social Philosophy?*

Such an all-embracing concept of freedom looks promising if we want to comprehend the foundations of social reality. Therefore, it is not surprising that Hegel scholars have tried to elaborate on *Hegel's Social Philosophy*,[111] *Foundations of Hegel's Social Theory*,[112] or have undertaken an *Attempt at a Reactualization of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*[113] as a social philosophy.

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111   M. Hardimon, *Hegels Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation* (Cambridge [etc.]: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

112   F. Neuhouser, *Foundations of Hegel's Social Theory: Actualizing Freedom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000).

113   Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit.*—Because of its focus on a theory of action, Honneth, Ibid., pp. 55, cf. 66, reads Hegel's philosophy of right as the outline of a social ontology.

Nevertheless, for several reasons such efforts are more problematic than they initially seem. The need to render a conceptual account for the social emerges in the course of the nineteenth century. As the social sciences come into being and develop, the problem of determining the specific objectivity of these sciences becomes urgent. Before then, what was later called 'social philosophy' was primarily treated within the context of practical philosophy. Whoever refers to Hegel's social philosophy or theory is obliged to *justify* philosophically the concept of the social. Notwithstanding this, the protagonists of Hegel's social philosophy or theory take the concept of the social for granted. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Hegel inspired several social ontological investigations,[114] the fact, not less important, that not even the word 'social' occurs in Hegel's work, should give rise to caution and suspicion.[115]

114　K. Mayer-Moreau, *Hegels Socialphilosophie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1910), gave an early impulse for interpreting Hegel as a social philosopher. Hegel does indeed distinguish in his philosophy of right between the state and the civil society. With this distinction, he offers conceptual means to think something like social philosophy. However, this view identifies civil society with sociality, and on top of that detaches the so called social philosophy from its functional position within Hegel's philosophy of right. Although Röttgers, *Kategorien der Sozialphilosophie*, pp. 34 f., sees this correctly, he too does not justify the concept of the social in Hegel's philosophy; actually, he only stipulates that the social is teleologically oriented towards the political (state) and as civil society absorbed by the economic—therewith, Röttgers presupposes a determined concept of the social beyond Hegel's philosophy. Hegel's philosophy of spirit has also inspired early social ontological studies like H. Freyer, *Theorie des objektiven Geistes: Eine Einleitung in die Kulturphilosophie* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1923), and N. Hartmann, *Das Problem des geistigen Seins: Untersuchungen zur Grundlegung der Geschichtsphilosophie und der Geisteswissenschaften* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1933).

115　The word only pops up citing Rousseaus *Du Contrat social*.—Hardimon, *Hegels Social Philosophy*, pp. 16 (incl. note 16), notes that the term 'social world' cannot be found in Hegel's work. He uses the term for Hegel's sphere of mores ("ethical world," in the common, yet misleading, English translation of *Sittlichkeit*), hence, the figures (*Gestalt*) of family, civil society, state; he also uses the term the society as distinct from all kinds of social/ societal subspheres. In general, social world for Hardimon means 'society'. Neuhouser, *Hegel's Social Theory*, p. 5, too knows that 'social freedom' is not a Hegelian term. He means the type of freedom relevant for Hegel's sphere of mores ('ethical life'). For him, Hegel's social theory turns out to be Hegel's social philosophy, which essentially concerns the doctrine of *Sittlichkeit*. A philosophical justification, in particular a defense within Hegel's philosophy of right, why and how sociality has to be introduced into philosophy, is lacking both in Hardimon and Neuhouser.—Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, pp. 17 ff., too speaks without any hesitation about Hegel's realm of mores as of the social realm: more precisely, he addresses the whole realm of objective spirit as a social sphere because this realm makes up the social conditions of actualizing individual freedom

6.4   *Constructing the Social from Hegel's Philosophy*

This caution and suspicion boils down to the task of constructing the social (and its philosophy) from the principles of Hegel's philosophy. Although Hegel, for good reasons, does not declare his project of the logic and the philosophy of reality as an 'ontology', the contemporary debate on the foundations of the social takes place under the title 'social ontology'. Hence, in contemporary terms, the intended construction of the social is to be understood as a contribution to *social ontology*: that is to say, to an ontology of the social sphere, a philosophical theory of the objectivity of the social (*Sachlehre, Gegenstandslehre*). The idealist social ontology to be developed concerns a construction of the meaning of the social from thought as the principle of objectivity. Accomplishing this effort implies that fundamental questions have to be posed. These questions concern philosophy itself and its thematic, methodic, and systemic profile. It is indispensable for getting a grip on the social in Hegel's philosophy to answer them adequately.

Honneth's famous attempt at a reactualization of Hegel's philosophy of right, for instance, unfortunately suffers from surpassing instead of mastering such questions. The intrinsic methodological relation between logic and the philosophy of reality as well as the embeddedness of the philosophy of reality in the system of philosophy are of particular far-reaching relevance. What Honneth calls the "proper substance" of Hegel's philosophy of right certainly

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(cf. Ibid., pp. 20, 22, 29, 31 f., etc.). Also S. Mertens, *Die juridische Vermittlung des Sozialen: Die konzeptuelle Basis der reifen Theorie des Juridischen und die Bedeutung der Theorie des Rechts für die Theorie des komplementären Zusammenhanges von Gemeinwesen und Gesellschaft moderner sittlicher Gemeinwesen in G.W.F. Hegels "Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts" (1821)* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008), pp. 12 ff. with 33, 367 f., etcetera, does not go into the social as such but treats the differentiation and mediation of the civil society and the state—so to speak the 'juridical mediation of sociality'— on the basis of a straightforward identification of Hegel's 'civil society' with the realm of the social. J. Heinrichs, *Logik des Sozialen: Woraus Gesellschaft entsteht*, akt. Neuausg. von "Reflexionen des sozialen Systems", Bonn 1976 (Varna, Sofia, München, Moskau, Warschau, Chelmsford, Essex (UK), Delaware (USA): Steno, 2005), p. 268, simply identifies "sociality" with Hegel's "*Sittlichkeit*," but he also understands the whole sphere of right as "whole of sociality," "philosophy of right" as "social philosophy" (Ibid., p. 274), without, however, reflecting the meaning of Hegel's encompassing determination of right and his own, Heinrich's, identification of it with sociality. Stekeler-Weithofer, *Hegels System*, pp. 401 ff., labels Hegel's philosophy of spirit without any ado as "social theory of the spirit," leaving the concept of the social unproblematic. It remains unproblematic too, for example, in B. Tuschling, 'Rationis Societas: Remarks on Kant and Hegel', in P. Rossi and M. J. Wreen (eds.), *Kant's Philosophy of Religion Reconsidered* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. 181–205.

cannot be grasped without reference to the system.[116] Therefore, the legitimatory status of 'social pathologies' and the exposed position social pathologies that go along with it in Honneth's conception become highly problematic.[117] The idea of philosophical foundation they express does not fit in to Hegel's conception of founding phenomena of reality.

Seen methodologically, Hegel does not show the specific legitimacy of a certain sphere of the objective spirit by demonstrating its "social damages," its "pathological effects" for the validity for the self-relation of subjects if such a sphere is made absolute, while it only contains an incomplete concept of freedom—for Honneth even an "empirical" indicator for transcending the legitimate area of validity of a specific sphere.[118] On the contrary, Hegel's claim to justify any determination 'from the concept' thwarts Honneth's "indirect, time diagnostic scheme of justification,"[119] as the systemic relations, starting from 'being' in the logic until the 'absolute spirit' in the philosophy of reality show. Although Hegel's justificatory claim too contains a specific 'empirical relation to experience', under the title 'suffering from indeterminacy', Honneth lifts the empirical constellation of social pathologies to the rank of an *empeirem*: social pathologies function as a basis for validity, while suffering, here, 'indicates' a violation of the borders of a legitimate sphere. For Honneth, Hegel is only able to proceed this way because this first "background conviction" of empirical knowledge is joined by an even much more important second background conviction: social reality is not "indifferent" regarding the application of insufficient determinations of human existence—a "practical breach" of reason leads to social dislocations.[120] With this view, Honneth restitutes, nolens volens, the "ontological concept of spirit" he criticized so harshly and aimed to abandon.[121] Despite Honneth's philosophical pretentions, the

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116   Why, for instance, should the realm of *Sittlichkeit* be the "proper core" of the philosophy of right? (Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, p. 39) Should we not conceive of this core, if that makes sense at all, as the processuality that characterizes the development, instead as of a stage of that development? Cores as stages seem not to express the conceptual structure of Hegel's system of philosophy. Not even the absolute idea is, taken as a stage, its core; it would only be that core as the 'only object of philosophy', yet, in this case too, 'core' would be an insufficient metaphor.

117   Cf. Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, pp. 16 f., 49 ff.; Honneth, 'Sozialphilosophie'.

118   Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*, pp. 41, etc.

119   Ibid., pp. 41 f., 51 f. Honneth's dealing with Hegel stems from the tradition of neo-Marxism as advanced by Adorno and Habermas. Especially Habermas' idea that 'critical theory' should be conducted as addressing social pathologies guides Honneth's approach.

120   Ibid., pp. 42, cf. 15, 51 f.

121   Ibid., p. 13.

knowledge that incorrect interpretations eventuate in damages of social reality, a one-sided self-understanding practically leads to a 'suffering from indeterminacy', is empirical knowledge. Hence, Honneth offers a kind of *ontic.* To put it drastically, Honneth comes up with *'former' metaphysics*—with Hegel criticism, no reactualization of Hegel's philosophy of right.[122]

7   Post-Hegelian History as a Resource

What do the foregoing elaborations on the programmatic setting of Hegel's philosophy mean for the construction of the social within this philosophy? In first instance, they mean that the social does not have its determinacy beyond the process of self-determination of the idea as the one and only object and content of philosophy. The social only has its determinacy as a moment in this process. It is therefore not just any determination taken from elsewhere, and hence, merely presupposed as the social, but determined in terms of the place it has in the system of philosophy, and, by implication, accounted for in the mode of necessity. With this said, the following question arises: What is the place of the social in Hegel's system of philosophy?

   Concerning this question too, it is in no way helpful to conceive of Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit as 'practical' philosophy, suggesting a close relationship with the social. It only leads to putting the social in an unproblematic, or even an un-Hegelian context of determination, as Hegel's philosophy of spirit is not a practical philosophy. And if the history of the concept of the social and of social philosophy *before* Hegel is to be exploited for the determination of the social, then there is no escape from the brute fact that regarding this history, Hegel himself saw no reason to introduce the social as a concept into his encyclopedia of the philosophical sciences. For this reason, a new constellation, concerning the social *after* Hegel, must have occurred, which is in need of becoming a subject of philosophical discussion.

   In conformity with the material starting point of philosophy, all kinds of philosophical and pre-philosophical, at any rate 'given' or 'presupposed', meanings we are acquainted with enter philosophical comprehending thought. They receive their veracious meaning by 'translating them into the concept';

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122   For Hegel, *Enz* §§ 163 A2, the concept is the "genuine first, and things are what they are through the activity of the concept, immanent in them, and revealing itself in them"; "thought and (more exactly) the concept" functions as the "infinite form, or the free creative activity, which can realize itself without the help of a matter that exists outside it." And all of this in the mode of necessity (Ibid., § 9).

hence, they obtain throughout a modified meaning in the concept of the philosophical process of determination. The empirical-factual use of language is not decisive for this philosophical determination; variations of the empirical meaning do not affect the advancement of philosophical determination, as the necessity of this advancement is guaranteed by the 'concept'.[123] Concerning particularly the philosophy of spirit, the problem occurs that the stages of its conceptual development do not exist in themselves but only as "moments, states, determinations of higher stages of development."[124] We need to find adequate current terms for phenomena of spirit that we are familiar with, and which are suitable for naming those abstractly thought phenomena of spirit (as if they existed in themselves), or in other words, terms we are inclined to use, anticipating conceptually later, more concrete phenomena of spirit.[125]

As previously said, Hegel did not find it necessary to nominate the social expressly as such an abstractly thought phenomenon of spirit. In contrast to us, for Hegel the social is apparently not such a phenomenon he is familiar with and has a name for. The main reason for this seems to be the emergence of the *social sciences* in the course of the nineteenth century. With the emergence of these sciences, the scientific quest for determining the specific objectivity of the social arose, i.e. the subject matter the social sciences claim to deal with. *Social philosophy's* primary task is to accomplish this determination. As a consequence, we are referred to post-Hegelian history—post-Hegelian history supplies the material for *us*, when we aim to construct the social in *Hegel's* philosophy.

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123   See on this D. Wandschneider, 'Zur Struktur dialektischer Begriffsentwicklung', in D. Wandschneider (ed.), *Das Problem der Dialektik* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1997), pp. 114–69, at pp. 157–61, and H. F. Fulda, 'Hegels Dialektik als Begriffsbewegung und Darstellungsweise', in R.-P. Horstmann (ed.), *Seminar, Dialektik in der Philosophie Hegels* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978), pp. 124–78.

124   *Enz*, § 380.

125   See also Fulda, *Hegel*, p. 161, on this problem of 'nominating (*namhaft machen*) empirical appearances' (*Enz* § 246 N).

Constructing Social Reality—From Kantian Transcendental Philosophy to a Hegelian Concept of the Social

1   Neo-Kantianism

In chapter two, it was stressed that from the perspective of a history of problems, the concept of the social was traditionally articulated within a practical setting. It had a practical connotation. As a genuine, specific realm of meaning, the social became a concept for theoretical determination in the course of the nineteenth century. A philosophical reflection accompanying the detachment of the link between the social and the practical, and with that the differentiation of the social sphere, did not emerge before the end of the nineteenth century. Post-Hegelian history supplies the material for us, when we aim to construct the social in Hegel's philosophy.

For Röttgers, the history of the social and of social philosophy begins with three philosophers who were part of the neo-Kantian movement or are least had close relationships to its spirit: Simmel, Stein, and, in particular, Stammler.[1] Social philosophy, then, starts with neo-Kantianism; and taking into account the formative role of Stammler for establishing social philosophy, it more specifically starts with the Marburg School of neo-Kantianism.[2] Röttgers shows that Stammler's model of social philosophy follows a double orientation. The first main feature of social philosophy is 'theoretical' in nature, as social philosophy develops a philosophy of science of the social sciences, determining the fundamental structure of the object of the social sciences and its knowledge. The second feature is 'practical', as social philosophy in the nineteenth century is motivated by social dislocations, dealing with conditions of social action (which Röttgers connotes as 'normative', 'moralizing', 'assessing').[3]

Röttgers' next step, though, is rather surprising. He holds that it is necessary to surpass neo-Kantianism because of the "challenge of the philosophy of culture":[4] According to Röttgers, the South-West school of neo-Kantianism—

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1   K. Röttgers, *Kategorien der Sozialphilosophie* (Magdeburg: Scriptum, 2002), pp. 48 with 55 f.
2   Ibid., pp. 60 f. with 63, cf. 53, 59.
3   Ibid., pp. 63, etc.
4   Ibid., pp. 64 ff.

Röttgers addresses Windelband as its representative—tempts to base social philosophy within the framework of a philosophy of culture. For Röttgers, Windelband, however, does not offer a social philosophical elaboration of such a foundation, that is to say, Windelband offers no transcendental culture- (or value-)philosophical determination of the social. As social philosophy therefore would miss a sufficient foundation, Röttgers suspects the danger of a diffuse propinquity to empirical sociology and to a mere moralizing type of socialism.[5]

With regard to Windelband, one may criticize such a foundational short-coming. Nevertheless, Windelband clearly sees that the community of the will (*Willensgemeinschaft*) is a *reality condition* of culture: it enables the creation of culture,[6] although Windelband ethicizes this reality condition.[7] However, within the South-West school of neo-Kantianism there do not only exist con-cepts of social philosophy which are better justified than that of Windelband; the thought of 'constructing a mutual world of meaning'—that is the thought which leads Röttgers to praise Cassirer[8]—guides the South-West school too.[9] Considering both that Cassirer, as Röttgers knows, does not just stem from Marburg neo-Kantianism but methodologically always remained a neo-Kantian,[10] and the Marburg and the South-West school together make up the mainstream of neo-Kantianism, Röttgers' superseding of neo-Kantianism with Cassirer hardly makes sense. On the contrary, the possibilities of neo-Kan-tianism have not drawn proper scientific attention.[11] This becomes clear if we

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5   Ibid., p. 66.

6   W. Windelband, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, 3rd edn. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1923), pp. 319 f.

7   Cf. C. Krijnen, 'Le problème de la fondation de l'ontologie sociale et les dispositifs fondationnels du néokantisme de Bade', *Les Études philosophiques* 84 (2010), 67–86, at 83 ff.

8   Röttgers, *Kategorien der Sozialphilosophie*, pp. 66 ff.

9   See for the foundational framework of South-West neo-Kantianism extensively C. Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn: Eine problemgeschichtliche und systematische Studie zu den Prinzipien der Wertphilosophie Heinrich Rickerts* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001). On its philosophy of culture see Ibid., chap. 2, and recently Krijnen, C., 'Philosophy as Philosophy of Culture?', in N. de Warren and A. Staiti (eds.), *New Approaches to Neokantianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 111–26.

10 As Ferrari showed: M. Ferrari, 'Ist Cassirer methodisch gesehen ein Neukantianer?', in D. Pätzold and C. Krijnen (eds.), *Der Neukantianismus und das Erbe des deutschen Idealismus: Die philosophische Methode* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002), pp. 103–22; M. Ferrari, *Ernst Cassirer: Stationen einer philosophischen Biographie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2003), chap. 10.

11 Röttgers agrees with Cassirer's (popular) criticism of Rickert's system of values. See E. Cassirer, *Zur Logik der Kulturwissenschaften: Fünf Studien* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche

analyze the other leader of South-West neo-Kantianism: Rickert. In Rickert, we can find what Röttgers, referring to Cassirer, has in mind with the "common world of meaning"[12] and the "medial world between I and You."[13] Moreover, we can also find such a conception within the required transcendental context of a philosophy of values.

This context is very important for a discussion with Hegel. Despite the suggestion of the name neo-Kantianism, Hegel is present throughout here. The neo-Kantians aim at a 'synthesis' between Kant and Hegel. This synthesis, of course, takes places under the aegis of Kant, as in their view Hegel contaminates the radical foundations of modernity with classical metaphysics, hence, leaving the framework of Kantian transcendental philosophy.[14] However, the relevance of Hegel's philosophy, its method, and systemic profile is underestimated here, as we shall see concerning the foundations of sociality. For now, Rickert's neo-Kantianism can serve as an adequate starting point to exploit post-Hegelian history of philosophy in order to get a conceptual grip on the social. I will first carve out rather extensively Rickert's conception (2), as it has a paradigmatic function for both the developments within neo-Kantianism and later Kantian transcendental philosophy (3). On the basis of the insights into the concept of sociality within Kantian transcendental philosophy acquired during this process, it will become clear, how the social in Hegel's speculative idealism has to be constructed. Section 4 therefore bears the title 'Conclusion: The Social in Hegel's Philosophy'. In both conceptions, that of Kantian transcendental philosophy and of Hegel, sociality is essentially about actualizing freedom. Chapter 4, then, will confront the Kantian and Hegelian type of idealist construction of sociality, hence of actualizing freedom, with each other.

       Buchgesellschaft, 1961), p. 37. However, Cassirer's criticism that the historian does not have an absolute system of values at his disposal is not relevant for solving the problem at hand, that is the foundation of social philosophy. Rickert's contribution to the solution remains hidden for Röttgers, to the detriment of his "extraction of the 'social.'" The "three jumps of liberation" he sketches—Spann, Horkheimer, Waldenfels—jump past neo-Kantianism instead of going through, just like his further elaboration—leaning heavily on phenomenology—along the "communicative text" follows a different route than the one paved by Hegel's or neo-Kantian idealism.

12   Röttgers, *Kategorien der Sozialphilosophie*, p. 69.

13   Ibid., p. 68.

14   Cf. on Hegel and neo-Kantianism: W. Flach, *Negation und Andersheit: Ein Beitrag zur Problematik der Letztimplikation* (München, Basel: Schwabe, 1959); H. Holzhey, 'Hegel im Neukantianismus: Maskerade und Diskurs', *il cannocchiale. rivista di studi filosofici* (1991), 9–27; C. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System: Prinzipientheoretische Untersuchungen zum Systemgedanken bei Hegel, im Neukantianismus und in der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008).

2 Rickert's Axiological Foundations of Sociality

2.1 *Social Ontology*

Concerning the task and the possibility of a social ontology, it is relevant to note that the term 'social reality' ('sociality', 'the social') is not a major term in Rickert's philosophy, let alone a title for one of his published works, as are for instance 'nature' or 'culture'. The matter at hand, however, is present throughout his work.[15] As Rickert himself did not offer an explicit philosophical foundation for social reality, a *conceptual scheme* for such a foundation has to be developed, a scheme derived from the philosophical foundations Rickert did offer. Indeed, Rickert's concept of *philosophy of history* contains the key for a formal determination of what is nowadays is called a social ontology; that is to say, by studying Rickert's construction of history, we can learn how to determine social reality philosophically.

For Rickert, philosophy is as such a science of *totality.* As for Rickert a science of totality is only possible as a philosophy of *values*,[16] social ontology is only possible as a philosophy of values too. Social ontology, of course, is not a general theory of being but a regional ontology: the ontology of a *specific realm* of being or reality. Reality is the subject matter of the non-philosophical sciences too. Differing from these sciences, however, philosophy as a science addresses reality as being determined by values. Furthermore, in Rickert's framework the ontological questions that arise should be transformed into problems of 'theoretical' values (*theoretische Wertprobleme*), or of epistemic values, as they are called today. Hence, an ontology of reality becomes a theory of "theoretical values."[17]

Rickert's system provides two modes of approach for understanding what a regional ontology of reality is and how it should be developed: a *philosophy of nature* and a *philosophy of history*.[18] Both philosophical disciplines belong

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15   In his later years he even gave lectures on 'social philosophy'.

16   Cf. Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn.*

17   H. Rickert, *System der Philosophie: Erster Teil: Allgemeine Grundlegung der Philosophie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1921), pp. 176, 180 f., 191; H. Rickert, *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis: Einführung in die Transzendentalphilosophie*, 6. verb. Aufl. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1928), pp. 438 f.

18   Rickert, *System*, pp. 211 ff.; cf. also H. Rickert, *Die Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie*, 3. umg. Aufl. (Heidelberg: Winter, 1924); H. Rickert, *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung: Eine logische Einleitung in die historischen Wissenschaften*, 5. verb. u. erw. Aufl. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1929), esp. pp. 624 ff.

to Rickert's *theoretical philosophy.*[19] Accordingly, his theoretical philosophy contains an intra-foundational dimension (concerning the foundations of philosophy itself) and an extra-foundational dimension (concerning the foundations of reality). But this does not only apply to theoretical philosophy: the foundations of reality also have a complex structure. Against persistent prejudices regarding neo-Kantianism, the foundations of reality are in no way restricted to 'logic' or 'epistemology'—they also contain ontology and a particular relation between logic[20] and ontology. Apparently, the neo-Kantians do not reduce philosophy to 'epistemology'.

With regard to the *philosophy of nature*, Rickert introduces a distinction between the principles of knowledge of nature, that is, a "logic" of natural knowledge ('generalizing'), and the "principles" of nature, that is, of nature as an object of knowledge.[21] The theory of principles of nature is a philosophical theory of objects, of subject matter, a theory concerning the objects of knowledge—an ontology of nature. This ontology of nature determines the general object of natural knowledge: nature as a whole of principles, nature in its objectivity. Within Rickert's concept of philosophy, an ontology of nature comprehends nature as a completed totality (*voll-endete Totalität*). As the natural sciences are considered to be engaged in explaining nature, they are subjected to a task of knowledge (*Erkenntnisaufgabe*). The philosophy of nature, then, turns out to be a "theory of theoretical values," videlicet of the values guiding the natural sciences in realizing their task of knowledge.[22]

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19   Because Rickert concentrates on scientific knowledge, he also calls theoretical philosophy *Wissenschaftslehre*, which includes, to use the terms current in the Anglo-Saxon world, both epistemology and philosophy of science (cf. Rickert, *System*, pp. 344 with 347, 210 f.). Sometimes Rickert uses the term *Wissenschaftslehre* in a narrow sense, meaning a theory about methodological forms of scientific knowledge (cf. Rickert, *Gegenstand*, p. 404; H. Rickert, *Die Logik des Prädikats und das Problem der Ontologie* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1930), p. 4). Ontology is part of *Wissenschaftslehre* in the wide sense (Rickert, *Logik des Prädikats*, pp. 3 f.).

20   Following Kant's concept, the neo-Kantians deal with logic in its function for our knowledge of objects and their determination. Hence, they develop an understanding of logic that is knowledge functional and in that sense objective. For them, logic is an 'epistemological' or 'objective' logic. See on this Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*: regarding Windelband, chap. 2.4.2, esp. note 81, regarding Rickert, chap. 4, regarding the Marburg school, Husserl, and later transcendental philosophy, p. 292, note 78.

21   Rickert, *System*, pp. 214 f.

22   Ibid., pp. 216, cf. 180 f., 184, 191, 199 f., 210.

The case of the *philosophy of history* is a different one. This is due to the specificity of the "historical material and the historical sciences"[23]—namely the importance of "values."[24] Nevertheless, at a formal level, we can identify an identical structure of both philosophical modes. As in the philosophy of nature, in the philosophy of history too Rickert distinguishes between a theory of "historical knowledge" ('individualizing'), that is to say, the principles of knowledge of history as part of "logic," and a theory of the "historical principles."[25] And as in the philosophy of nature, in the philosophy of history too, the general component of the subject matter, namely history, is in question in the sense of an entirety of principles. That is to say, the philosophy of history concerns the objectivity of history; it determines *what* history as history is.

However, in contrast to those of nature, the principles of historical life are "values." Values constitute the historical universe.[26] Hence, the theory of principles of history is—like the logic of history—a science of values. Therefore, the theory of the principles of history—unlike that of nature—extends beyond *theoretical* philosophy: it requires the *system of values* in order to determine its object. Consequently, the science of the principles of history relies on *atheoretical* values too (for instance values like morality, justice, beauty, etcetera).[27] As a result, the foundations of the philosophy of history, as the science of historical life, coincide with "philosophy as a science of values" (*Wertwissenschaft*).[28]

Hence, in Rickert's philosophy, social ontology is only possible in connection with a system of (theoretical and atheoretical) values. Sociality itself must be a value in the system of values—social ontology *is* the philosophical theory of this value, of the social *as* social. Social ontology, then, renders the content of the value or idea of the social explicit.

For understanding social ontology within Rickert's setting, it is essential to understand how explicating the social depends upon a relation between the *knowledge* of reality and the *principles* of reality. In regard to this question too, the different approaches of Rickert's philosophy of nature and his philosophy of history offer an initial basis for that understanding. From the broader vantage point of neo-Kantian philosophy, logic (*Logik, Erkenntnistheorie*) is held

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23 Ibid., p. 216.
24 Ibid., p. 217.
25 Rickert, *System*, p. 216; Rickert, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, p. 6.
26 Rickert, *System*, p. 227; Rickert, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, p. 109.
27 Cf. Rickert, *System*, p. 227.
28 Rickert, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, pp. 118, 155.

to possess the primacy in the relation between knowledge and its objects. For Rickert, logic is an objective logic, a logic of the object: a theory which is concerned with thought as thought of objects, hence, with the objectivity of thought. The primacy of logic, however, extends beyond this function. Logic is the *philosophia prima* in at least two respects.[29]

Logic has a primacy in a *logical-methodological* perspective insofar as all later disciplines, containing and generating philosophical, hence, conceptual knowledge, presuppose logical determinations. These determinations finally lead to the science of logic as the first and most foundational discipline of philosophy. All other philosophical disciplines, being scientific knowledge, derive their origin of development from the science of logic. Among other things, logic formulates methodological guidelines for the other philosophical disciplines. This logical-methodological primacy is accompanied by a primacy from a *paradigmatic* perspective. That is to say, the science of logic uncovers and justifies principles which in the further development of philosophy obtain an *axiotic* function: a universal function, a function determining the whole system of philosophy. The foundational relations that were demonstrated to be fundamental in logic reappear in all parts of the system of philosophy.

Both dimensions of the primacy of logic are relevant for social ontology. At an initial level, this relevance concerns the relation between a theory of principles of knowledge of reality and a theory of the principles of reality. In this respect, the decisive point is that, although logic and ontology belong together systematically, for Rickert *'formal'* ('logical', 'methodological') determinations precede for foundational reasons *'material'* ('ontological') determinations regarding their validity. Ontology can only be conceptualized on a logical foundation. This primacy of logic returns in any regional ontology. It therefore also returns in the case of an ontology of nature and an ontology of history. Rickert continuously shows that the intention of knowledge, the logical or formal purpose of 'generalizing' and 'individualizing' concept formation, leads to a material qualification, a qualification of the objects of knowledge. Natural objects are value-free (*wertfrei, sinnfrei*), cultural objects are value-laden (*wertbehaftet, sinnvoll*). Hence, between nature and culture there is a logical opposition. All this follows from a philosophical *logic* of empirical knowledge. This logic not only determines the method of empirical knowledge but also the object regarding its original determinacy. Form and material, method and object are intrinsically related to each other. On the basis of logi-

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29   Cf. Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, chap. 3.4 with 7.2.1; Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, pp. 205 f.

cal insights, it proves to be the case that historical principles emerge as 'values', hence, that the theory of the principles of history must be a science of values.

The task, then, of a theory of the principles of history is to determine the concept of history as an *object* of historical knowledge. The theory of the principles of history determines *what* history is.[30] However, in order to fulfil this task, a theory of the principles of history *presupposes* the concept of history (whose principles it seeks to determine) as an already determined concept. This concept of history, presupposed by a theory of the principles of history, is itself the result of a philosophical process of determination. The philosophical science of logic (methodology) of empirical knowledge provides this initiation level of the determination of the concept of history presupposed by a theory of the principles of history. History as an object is correlative to the purpose (*Erkenntniszweck*) of historical knowledge. As the correlative counterpart of historical knowledge, history is a *value-laden reality* (*wertbehaftete Wirklichkeit*). The theory of the principles of history has to determine the principles of this value-laden reality, that is, culture. Thus, the theory of the principles of history determines the *concept* of history regarding its form.

The logical goal of individualizing concept formation, however, does not indicate *which* objects are historically important. It only establishes *what* a historical object as such is: it is a value-laden reality. Because of this, the logic of empirical knowledge directs the theory of the principles of history towards values: values are the constitutive factors of historical reality. The logic of empirical knowledge finally directs the theory of the principles of history even towards the *system* of values (whereas, on the contrary, nature, as the object of a generalizing concept formation, is philosophically determined as *value-free reality*). The principles of historical or cultural reality are values. They make up the meaning (*Sinn*) of history. The science of logic itself cannot determine these values. Their determination results from historical knowledge and its philosophical appropriation, from a philosophical reflection on the validity of the values: from philosophy as a science of values.[31] The system of values, which from the point of view of philosophy of history is the system of historical principles, is a *philosophical* system of values. The theory of the principles of history therefore cannot be conceptualized as being 'theoretical' philosophy, that is, as a philosophy solely of 'theoretical values': it broadens itself to a philosophical discipline that encompasses and integrates the system of |(theoretical and atheoretical) values.

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30   Cf. Rickert, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, pp. 83, 87 f.

31   Cf. Rickert, *Grenzen*, p. 281.

Beyond questions about the existence, viability, and consequences of such a position,[32] the question regarding the possibility of a theory of the principles of the social (social reality, sociality)—a social ontology—requires a broader perspective than the one outlined so far. Until now, the deliberations were part of what could be called the philosophy of science. In order to characterize the social in its objectivity, at least concerning its beginnings, however, it is necessary to turn towards the *system* of philosophy.

Before proceeding to this particular characterization, it must be emphasized that the *material* of the philosophical knowledge of culture does not only consist of empirical knowledge of culture provided by the cultural sciences but of culture itself. For the famous neo-Kantian *Faktumtheorem*, philosophy departs from the factual yet mostly implicit human claim that human behavior is oriented towards or determined by objective values.[33] The factum (also that of science) therefore is a *problematic* starting point; its validity cannot be presupposed. Philosophy, through its method of reflecting the validity of the objective values referred to, hence, through validity reflection, reveals several sets of principles or 'forms of values'. The foundation of the meaning and validity of human activity is composed of these values. Philosophy also determines the conceptual relations between these values, leading to the formulation of a system of values: the system of philosophy.

The social, as a methodologically legitimate theme of philosophy, must be part of the system of philosophy. The philosophical determination of the social in the system of philosophy initially results in a social ontology *sui generis.* Social ontology determines a specific dimension of the manner humans shape themselves and the world they live in. The following section will undertake the determination of the social in terms of the system of philosophy. The social is the material presupposition of any social ontology. Logically, social ontology should commence from the determination of the concept of the social as a concept that should be determined by social ontology: social ontology commences with characterizing the sphere of the social itself.

2.2   *The Social*

The concept of the *social* is not accorded a prominent position in Rickert's philosophical project. This lack of prominence is a consequence of the fact that the concept of the social traditionally belongs to the domain of 'practical philosophy', particularly political philosophy, including philosophy of law and

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32   See on this topic Krijnen, *Philosophie als System.*

33   See for the neo-Kantian *Faktumtheorem*: Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 1.3; Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, chap. 7.3.1.

the state and moral (ethical) philosophy. As discussed in chapter 2, the social as a specific realm of meaning only became a concept for theoretical determination during the course of the nineteenth century. In Rickert's time, a huge discussion on the social took place. For example Stammler, Lehmann, Dilthey, Spranger, Scheler, Durkheim, and Weber came up with important theoretical determinations of the social. These were highly contested and marked by a significant degree of heterogeneity. This extended to the more general notion of a social philosophy.

Rickert is a classic neither for the one nor for the other. Indeed, he does not really establish a developed and promising concept of social philosophy.[34] However, Rickert offers an interesting *basic sketch* or outline for such a philosophy, as I shall show in what follows.

Rickert's concept of the social is internally differentiated into a *wide* concept and a *narrow* concept. The wide concept is one in which the social functions as a concept *sui generis.* The social is effectively synonymous with culture.[35] The narrow concept, which is also more strongly present, is one in which the concept of the social is a concept composed of specific cultural constellations: social constellations.

This narrow concept of the social is significant for what Rickert calls social values and social goods (*Güter*) in contrast to asocial ones (for example, science and art). In this way, the social is not only a specific realm of culture, constituted by a specific fundamental value, but emerges as one of the two main groups of the whole system of philosophy.[36] This group of the social, then, contains several more specific realms of culture: the realm of the ethical (*Sittliche*),[37] the erotic, and the social-religious. For social ontology, it is both important and challenging to clarify the relation and thus the demarcation

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34   It is not superfluous to underline that Max Weber's concept of the social is not Rickert's. In order to develop his social theory, Weber uses elements of Rickert's philosophy. For Rickert, who dedicated his *Grenzen* (since the third edition) to Weber, Weber is not even a philosopher proper and also not a neo-Kantian (cf. Rickert, *Grenzen*, p. xxv, cf. also H. Rickert, 'Max Weber und seine Stellung zur Wissenschaft', *Logos* 15 (1926), 222–37, at 226 with 228 and 236 f.).—See on the Rickertian background of Weber's sociology, P.-U. Merz-Benz, *Max Weber und Heinrich Rickert: Die erkenntniskritischen Grundlagen der verstehenden Soziologie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1990).

35   Rickert, *System*, p. 222; Rickert, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, pp. 78 f., 91 f.

36   See for Rickert's conception of the system of philosophy Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 7, esp. 7.3.2.2.3 with 7.3.2.2.5, and Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, chap. 4.2.2, esp. no. 5.1 ff.

37   For Rickert, it is not the Hegelian but the Kantian sense of *Sitten* which guides him, hence, giving it an 'ethical' profile. Ethics, for Rickert, then, is the science of *Sittlichkeit.*

between the social and the ethical as well as between the social and the practical.

Within Rickert's philosophical system, the sphere of the social does not coincide with the sphere of the ethical: social philosophy is not ethics. Ethics, to be more precise, the object of ethical investigations, makes up one of the several dimensions of social philosophy, to be more precise, of the social. For Rickert, ethics as a science is always a "social ethics," and the 'person' is always a social person.[38] *Within* this social ethics, Rickert differentiates an individual ethics from a social ethics in the narrow sense, concerned with social relations in the various areas of social life. Among other things, the philosophy of law and political philosophy are part of social ethics in this narrow sense.[39] Hence, they are also part of social ethics in the wide sense—and with that of "practical philosophy," as Rickert sometimes designates the sphere of the social. Practical philosophy explores humans as "active" human beings.[40] Humans, as active human beings, are always social persons, individuals present together with other individuals.[41]

The ethical forms only part of the sphere of the practical. The meaning of social phenomena extends beyond these forms to encompass the whole: social phenomena comprise the whole sphere of the practical. Whereas in Rickert's system the social sphere of ethics is constituted by the concept of *duty*, social relations also exist that are constituted by an 'inclination' Rickert calls *love* (the theme of the philosophical science labeled *erotics*).[42] Within the social group of the system of philosophy, Rickert also distinguishes a *religious* dimension.[43]

The *validity* of values is essential for the determination of the outlines of the social. The social is nothing but the realm of culture constituted by 'social' values, that is, by values whose validity is only determinable by reference to a certain collectivity of subjects (whereas 'asocial' values have their validity determined independently of any social relation). However, if we move from this determination of the social to the social sciences for which social ontology is required to provide the foundations, it immediately becomes clear that the

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38   Cf. e.g. Rickert, *System*, pp. 328 ff.; H. Rickert, *Grundprobleme der Philosophie: Methodologie, Ontologie, Anthropologie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1934).

39   Rickert, *System*, p. 330; Rickert, *Grenzen*, pp. 721 ff.; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 188 ff.

40   Rickert, *System*, pp. 358 with 373, cf. 329; Rickert, *Grenzen*, pp. 706 ff.; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 188 ff.

41   Cf. e.g. Rickert, *System*, pp. 329 ff., 370 ff.; Rickert, *Grenzen*, p. 706; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 154 ff.

42   Rickert, *System*, pp. 394 f., 398; cf. Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 190 ff.

43   Rickert, *System*, pp. 399 ff.

field of the social sciences is not restricted to cultural realms constituted by social values. It also includes asocial realms like for instance art and science. Moreover, these realms are not studied only from the perspective of 'ethics', 'erotics', or 'personal holiness'. Thus, social ontology requires a *broader* concept of sociality in order to comprehend adequately the full range of objects within the domain of the social sciences. This, in turn, necessitates a justification of this broader concept at the level of a philosophical system.

Rickert's philosophical system includes such a broader and more fundamental concept of the social, preventing its reduction to the 'practical'. Within his framework, this is formulated through the notion of the "social meaning" of cultural phenomena that are part of the asocial group of values.[44] Consequently, relations at a higher level of generality contribute to the determination of the social, problematizing the initial division of the system into two main groups. More specifically, these overarching relations primarily concern two aspects through which a meaning of the social emerges which exceeds the practical; a meaning that integrates the sphere of 'contemplation', that is, the other main domain of Rickert's system of philosophy. The social proves to be a determination sui generis.

According to Rickert, in the realm of the social the real, concrete *person* is to be conceived as entailing a necessary connectedness to a plurality of persons. Rickert sometimes emphasizes their connection as "*social* in the broadest sense of the word."[45] Obviously scientists and artists are also persons, hence, we are dealing with a general determination of the cultural concept of humans. The social is the relation between persons, a community of persons. In addition, the social as the asocial validity of *values* constitutes the corresponding sphere of the system of philosophy. However, there is a dimension of both of these spheres of values that is necessarily determined as social: the dimension of *realizing* values (that is to say, of shaping reality according to values). Realizing values produces goods (*Güter*). The dimension of producing goods, of realizing values, always has a social character. The production of goods is a result of a real subject that realizes values. A subject realizing validity and, in turn, producing goods is a *person* in the broad sense of the word. Rickert is, on occasion, inclined to describe the social exactly as such a condition for the realization of values.[46] *As* a condition *of reality*, the person is a necessary

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44 Rickert, *System*, pp. 371, 403; Rickert, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, pp. 79 f.; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, p. 187.

45 Rickert, *System*, p. 370.

46 Rickert, *System*, pp. 332, 403; Rickert, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, p. 79; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 185 ff.

presupposition for the cultural production of goods, *a reality condition of culture*, regardless of the values that constitute these cultural goods. Hence, as *the* social is the relation between persons, *the* social is determined as a *condition of realization of values*. The social sciences explore such constellations: constellations of *realizing* values, of theoretical and non-theoretical values. They try to discern and explain the truth of them.

The determination of the social, as a condition of the realization of values, itself reflects a relation that could be considered to be the most fundamental of Rickert's whole system of philosophy: *the fundamental axiotic relation*.[47] Rickert qualified this fundamental axiotic relation as the "starting point" and "communal root" of all philosophy: "the correlation between valid values and the valuing subject."[48] It is a relation between values in which validity is absolute, although related to subjects, and subjects who, as subjects, are related to absolute values guiding their activity.

According to the doctrine of the fundamental axiotic relation, the realm of knowledge is characterized by a(n) (objective) normative constraint. This normative constraint leads theoretical (epistemic) endeavors (as is nowadays also emphasized in theories of inferential semantics[49] and philosophies of science dealing with 'epistemic values').[50] Knowing has the structure of taking an alternative position towards values. Values are, from the perspective of the subject, the point of orientation for its theoretical endeavors. A knowing subject is a subject that recognizes values: a subject that makes the value of 'truth' the determining factor of its behavior. Hence, the knowing subject subjects itself to an 'ought' and therefore amends its criteria for determination from factors of reality to factors of validity. Consequently, normative constraints are in no way constitutive only for the 'practical' realm. On the contrary, they make up the foundation of the whole human world, of both its theoretical and practical dimension. The distinguished realms of culture or validity, whichever, are specifications of the fundamental axiotic relation. It is this relation that

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47   See in detail, Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, esp. chap. 2.3, 6.3, 7.2 f.; Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 4.2.2, 5.4.

48   Rickert, *Gegenstand*, p. 438.

49   Cf. e.g. R. Brandom, *Making it Explicit: Reasoning, Representing, and Discursive Commitment* (Cambridge et al: Harvard University Press, 1994).

50   Cf. e.g. Haddock A., Millar A. and Pritchard D. (eds.), *Epistemic Value* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Schönrich G. (ed.), *Wissen und Werte* (Paderborn: mentis, 2009); Carrier M. and Schurz G. (eds.), *Werte in den Wissenschaften: Neue Ansätze zum Werturteilsstreit* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2013).

is thematic in what is called the doctrine of the 'primacy of practical reason'. It is not this doctrine's aim to narrow all foundations to ethics but to determine the fundamental axiotic relation. Rickert develops this doctrine by, so to speak, axiotizing the theoretical realm, giving it a paradigmatic meaning for all realms of culture.

From the perspective of the subject, that is, the validity noetic point of view, the subject obtains its fundamental determination by the concept of *self-formation*: the subject knows itself as related to values and with that subjected to a task, finally an infinite task. The fundamental axiotic relation is this relation between absolute *values* determining the subject concerning the validity of its endeavors and the *subject* which fulfils this infinite, unconditional task only in a finite, conditional way. As this infinity is a defining part of the validity claims of the validity function called 'subject', value-laden self-formation of the subject is self-formation according to values intrinsically or immanently part of its own subjectivity. Apparently, on the level of the fundamental axiotic relation the moment of self-formation, the basic characteristic of the subject, does not lead to a primacy of practical reason in the sense of a primacy of specific ethical, moral moments making up the foundation of all human self-formation. The concept of self-formation concerns the value relatedness or value ladenness, hence, the value determinacy *as such* of the subject.[51] The subject *is* the validity function of self-formation. From a validity noetic perspective, both theory and praxis are conceptualized as 'taking a position towards values' (*Stellungnehmen zu Werten*). For Rickert, the former "primacy of the practical" turns out to be a "primacy of values,"[52] a primacy of self-formation—not an embracing primacy of 'practical reason'.

The fundamental axiotic relation does not have a specific theoretical content but a *universal* one. Any formation of meaning (*Sinngebilde*), hence culture, has the structure of a subject that is related to values guiding its endeavors. By recognizing values the subject shapes culture. All philosophical disciplines, then, treat values and their realization by subjects; that is to say, philosophy has a noematic and a noetic focus. This '*axiotization' of the sphere of knowledge* involves an important transformation of concepts: philosophical concepts that traditionally have a 'practical' meaning are being transformed axiotically. Concepts like autonomy, duty, conscience, etcetera concern the validity-noetic

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51 Cf. Rickert, *Gegenstand*, pp. 189 f., 292 f., etc.

52 H. Rickert, 'Zwei Wege der Erkenntnistheorie: Transcendentalpsychologie und Transcendentallogik', *Kant-Studien* 14 (1909), 169–228, at 216.

side of the axiotic relation (the 'immanent meaning'). They reappear in all specifications (cultural realms) of the foundational axiotic relation.[53]

Let me elucidate the above by transposing some aspects into more Kantian terms. Transcendental knowledge of human endeavors leads to an entirety of grounds of validity, or as a neo-Kantian, Rickertian transcendental philosophy of values would express it, of values. Such grounds cannot be understood by referring to something *outside* the structure of the endeavors, namely by reference to some kind of a being, as in metaphysics or in empiricism. They can only be understood by reference to the validity claim and validity structure of human endeavors themselves. From this reference to the validity claim and validity structure of human endeavors, transcendental knowledge concerns humanity. It concerns that which qualifies us as human, the *humanum:* the *normative* dimension of human thinking and acting. Therefore, the fundamental factors guiding subjects are no longer metaphysical entities but values that are defining aspects of humanity itself. Hence, they are valid categorically, 'transcendent' in the sense that their validity does not depend on their factual recognition by subjects. On the contrary, they *should* be recognized because they contain what it means to be human, hence, the very capacity to think and act at all. They immediately determine the validity of human thought and actions, and thus of the thinking and acting subject. As the categorical validity of these values is part of the validity claims of the subject itself, their validity is 'immanent' too. The subject forms itself by being determined by values that belong to its own integral status as a subject, to its subjectivity.

Rickert determines the social as the dimension of realizing values. The social sciences thematize constellations of realizing values in the mode of the direct intentional relation to objects, characteristic for any individual science (*Einzelwissenschaft*). They are interested in gaining knowledge about constellations of realizing values as constellations of collectivities of subjects, regardless of which values they realize.

3   Contemporary Kantian Transcendental Philosophy

3.1   *On Transcendental Philosophy after 1945*
If my interpretation is correct, then Rickert's fundamental determination of the social does not only play a major role in South-West neo-Kantianism, though mainly under an ethicizing spell. Indeed, freed from this spell such

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53   Cf. e.g. Rickert, *System*, pp. 309 f.; Rickert, *Gegenstand*, pp. 435 ff.; Rickert, *Grenzen*, pp. 691 ff.; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 179 ff.

determination of the social becomes even more apparent in the development of later transcendental philosophy than in Rickert's philosophy itself. This applies to the conceptions of sociality elaborated by Hans Wagner and Werner Flach in their respective outlines of the system of philosophy.[54] Let me first say some introductory words about the historical background.

After the Second World War, Germany was in a desolate situation. The fall of the Nazi regime lead to a division into two states: a communist state in the 'east', dominated by a Leninist-Marxist philosophical doctrine that accompanied the new dictatorship; and a free, 'western' part. Yet, philosophy in this western part too had to re-orientate and liberate itself from Nazi doctrines and the philosophers close to them.

As far as the western part of Germany is concerned, the German philosophical tradition had been destroyed. Important philosophers had died during the Nazi regime, others had collaborated or had been forced to leave the country. Philosophical representatives of neo-Kantianism and logical positivism hardly existed. Within phenomenology, Husserlian and so called non-transcendental ('realist') types of philosophy did not play any role worth mentioning. Instead, Heidegger's philosophy had become dominant. Nicolai Hartmann was an important systematic thinker, but he died in 1950. Systematic philosophy was no longer held to be promising. Many considered it to be obsolete. Philosophy should restrict itself to the history of philosophy: to 'understanding' (*Verstehen*) instead of discussing questions about truth, morality, and so on in a systematic way as practiced by Kant, Hegel, the neo-Kantians, or, for instance, Husserl. Kant and other German idealists were thought to be of historical relevance only (this attitude led to important editorial projects of classical texts, philosophical dictionaries, historical monographs, and the like).

The systematic spirit of philosophy, of course, never fully disappeared. After the Second World War, however, German philosophy was no longer the field where systematic philosophy could flourish. Hence, thinkers interested in systematic philosophy oriented themselves to developments in other countries. Instead of continuing the German tradition of philosophy, they dedicated themselves to Anglo-Saxon, in particular 'analytical', philosophy; hence, to a type of philosophy that is intrinsically driven by empiricism, sometimes even positivism, but not by classical German idealism.

Against this background, it is not surprising that post-war Kantian transcendental philosophy, that is to say, the philosophy methodologically driven by

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54   Cf. H. Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*, 3rd edn. (Würzburg: Reinhardt, 1980), § 28; W. Flach, *Grundzüge der Ideenlehre: Die Themen der Selbstgestaltung des Menschen und seiner Welt, der Kultur* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1997), pp. 137 ff.

Kant's 'Copernican turn', had a difficult time. Only in the last three decades or so, has this type of philosophy become more visible. Yet the systematic tradition of German idealism never fully vanished. Some systematic thinkers stemming from the neo-Kantian tradition, who had, since the 1920's, been involved in intriguing discussions with (especially Husserlian) phenomenology, did develop philosophies with a more or less intrinsic relationship to Kant: see for instance the work of Rudolf Zocher or Wolfgang Cramer. Inspired by the 'linguistic turn', systematic German philosophers like Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas tried to 'transform' Kant's transcendental philosophy into a theory of communicative rationality, abandoning, however, Kant's subject-oriented foundations. Sticking to these foundations, both in theoretical and in practical philosophy, philosophies were developed more in accord with the Kantian guidelines, for instance by Klaus Düsing, Werner Flach, Dieter Henrich, Otfried Höffe, Wolfgang Kersting, Wolfgang Marx, Gerold Prauss, Gerd Wolandt, and Hans Wagner. For all of these authors, Kant's philosophy contains fundamental methodological insights significant to systematic philosophy. Most of them were convinced, however, that contemporary philosophy needs to integrate post-Kantian developments too. Orienting contemporary philosophy towards Kant not only implies re-activating Kant: it also implies rejuvenating his philosophy within a different constellation of philosophical problems. (Of course, in Germany orthodox Kantianism played and still plays a role: see the work of Julius Ebbinghaus, Klaus Reich, Manfred Baum, Georg Geismann, and others.)

Of high systematic significance is the Kantian approach developed by Hans Wagner and Werner Flach.[55] Like Kant, they are not willing to give up the idea that philosophy as a science is about radical foundations. Both try to integrate the important achievements of German idealist philosophy into a present-day philosophy that equally acknowledges the essential motives of phenomenology and contemporary German ontology (especially Wagner) as well as twentieth century developments within formal logic (especially Flach). Against popular criticisms of rationality, against attempts to reduce philosophy to historiography, to linguistic clarification of problems of detail, or to naturalize sense and meaning, Wagner and Flach show how under the present

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55 Cf. e.g. Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*; H. Wagner, *Kritische Philosophie: Systematische und historische Abhandlungen* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1980); H. Wagner, *Die Würde des Menschen: Wesen und Normfunktion* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1992); W. Flach, *Grundzüge der Erkenntnislehre: Erkenntniskritik, Logik, Methodologie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1994); Flach, *Ideenlehre*; W. Flach, *Die Idee der Transzendentalphilosophie: Immanuel Kant* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002).

philosophical conditions the idea of philosophy as a science of foundations can be effected.

Picking up motives from the neo-Kantian appropriation of Kant, both Wagner and Flach stress time and again that the problem of philosophy is that of *validity* (and not, for instance, that of (self-)consciousness as emphasized by Dieter Henrich and others). As far as its theme is concerned, philosophy is the theory of validity. Exploring philosophically the phenomenon of 'knowledge', for example, is to determine the validity of knowledge. Because of its validity claim, knowledge refers to objects; the objectivity of knowledge can only be sufficiently justified in terms of validity. As for Kant, the quest for validity is a quest for the *principles* of validity. Hence, a philosophical treatment of the problem of knowledge should determine and justify the principles of knowledge, not the concrete material validity of non-philosophical propositions. This determination and justification of knowledge leads to a set of principles, to the 'transcendental', to a whole of conditions that enable the validity of knowledge. As a result, philosophy constructs the (theoretical) foundation of valid theoretical propositions. Much more explicit than Kant, Wagner and Flach try to avoid any possible confusion between the philosophy of validity and the philosophy of consciousness, not to mention with that of communication (or even with psychology, biology, physiology, etcetera).

As in Kant's philosophy, the thematic orientation of philosophy towards validity is accompanied by a methodological orientation specific to philosophy: the method of philosophy is *reflection*. Thus, the principles of validity are to be detected and justified within an explication of the immanent, intrinsic meaning of the validity claim itself. The method of reflection is primarily a reflection on validity (not primarily a reflection on the 'I').[56] The reflection on validity captures the determinacy of validity; it captures the determinacy of validity as a structure that enables objective determination. Capturing this structure involves an investigation, primarily, not of the 'I', of 'consciousness', or of some sort of 'communication community'; in contrast, it involves an investigation of the validity claim, as this claim represents objective determination.

As for Kant, for Wagner and Flach, philosophy does not only have a specific thematic and methodological profile but a systemic profile too. Philosophy is, strictly speaking, only possible as a *system*. Although the philosophies of Wagner and Flach are in many aspects closely related to Kant's philosophy, like the neo-Kantians, both Wagner and Flach thoroughly modify the historical Kantian model. As a consequence, many characteristics of Kant's model

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56   As, for instance, in W. Cramer, *Die Monade: Das philosophische Problem vom Ursprung* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1954).

remain shadowy: for example, Kant's idea that the system of philosophy is separated into parts that conform to the powers of consciousness; that reason has two basic dimensions, the theoretical and the practical; that the system of philosophy consists of three critical parts and two doctrinal parts, etcetera. Instead of just reproducing Kant's positions, basic notions like 'intuition', 'categories', 'judgment', 'ideas', 'a priori', and so forth, undergo a systematic modification within a new philosophical framework that integrates many developments of post-Kantian philosophy, partly against Kant too. In addition, there are also fundamental and far-reaching differences between Wagner and Flach. The fact that they were inspired on a basic methodological level by Kant did not prevent, sometimes even motivated, and indeed, allowed for, a parting of ways. Nevertheless, leading for both is the idea that philosophy strives for radical foundations, takes shape as a system, grants the fundamental axiotic relation a basic foundational position, conceives of the concrete subject as the factor that logically individuates validity, or more precisely, as the factor of self-formation by validity principles, models the foundations of philosophy, all in all, in terms of a theory of correlation, typical of the Kantian tradition of transcendental philosophy, and not, like Hegel, in terms of a theory of negation.

3.2   *Hans Wagner's Concept of Sociality*

Regarding the determinacy of the social, Wagner adopts the following position. The realm that retrains us as concrete subjects is the realm of our *actual existence* (*Realdasein*) in the world, and that is to say, the realm of *labor*.[57] It concerns the realm of our actual life with all its needs and interests. In this respect, nature and society play a determining role. Wagner conceives of civilization and technology as human powers against the power of nature, whereas right and the state function as human powers against excessive pressure from society. These human powers make up specific and independent ideas of reason. Therefore, Wagner reproaches the tradition of philosophy for discussing right primarily in moral terms; by contrast, he aims to determine right within the context of a more encompassing concept of freedom.[58] The same applies to the value of the state. The concept of society too transcends the concept of the state and contains principles of sociality of its own. Furthermore, the ideas or values of economy, of technology, and of civilization cannot be reduced to 'mere' utility; for Wagner, they should be understood as domains of utility in which the subject forms itself according to an 'unconditional' idea,

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57   Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*, p. 300.

58   Ibid., pp. 301 f.

an idea founded in itself.[59] It is decisive for Wagner's approach of utility that he conceives of all these domains as domains in which the subject steps out of its 'inwardness' (of thought, volition, feeling) into its 'outwardness'.[60] Wagner holds that philosophical reflection discovers a new and genuine idea here: the idea of shaping nature and the human world unconditionally (that is, in the mode of freedom). With this, it also discovers the more basic idea of self-formation of the actual existence of the subject in nature and the world as well as of the labor it involves.[61] The subject steps into its outwardness as an unconditional (free) subject; the actual existence and the labor of the subject are subjected to unconditional formation (according to the validity principles of thought, volition, and feeling). Conditioned by nature and society, the subject forms its actual existence in conformity with its own unconditionedness (absoluteness, freedom).

The subject that forms its outwardness according to its own freedom or absoluteness, is a *person*.[62] As a real, concrete, factual subject, the person is a person among other persons, hence, part of a plurality of persons. This constellation leads to three ideas: firstly the idea of right,[63] secondly the idea of (the free) society,[64] and thirdly the idea of the state.[65] Within these three ideas, the subject forms itself in its actual existence unconditionally: as a person together with other persons.[66]

Yet, this is only side of the story. The other side is that nature remains a determining force, tarnishing the freedom of the subject. Against the power of nature too, the unconditionedness of the subject in its actual existence needs to be established. According to Wagner, this is effectuated by *labor*, of course, labor determined by an idea: by the ideas of economy, civilization, and technology. These ideas make up the realm of utility. Utility, however, shows itself to be related to an idea: to the idea of the *utile*.[67] The realm of utility concerns the *fundamental* neediness of human nature: the sheer natural world has to be transformed into a human world, into a world determined by humans lead by

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59   Ibid., pp. 302 f.
60   Ibid., pp. 303 f.
61   Ibid., pp. 304 f., 317.
62   Ibid., pp. 305 f.
63   Ibid., pp. 306 ff.
64   Ibid., pp. 309 f.
65   Ibid., pp. 310 ff.
66   Ibid., p. 315.
67   Ibid., pp. 315 f.

ideas. Nature, then, is transformed by labor, hence, by the unconditionedness of the subject.

Wagner not only conceives of the idea of unconditional self-formation of actual existence and labor as an independent idea but also takes its components together as the "economic-social idea": right, free society, and the state are the "social" moments of this idea and economy, civilization, and technology the "economic" ones.[68] The economic-social idea makes up the foundation and governs a specific relation between the subject and the world. It brings reality under the rule of the idea. Determined by the ideas of truth (thought), the good (volition), and the beautiful (feeling), the subject gets to work governed by the economic-social idea.

In conclusion, actualizing the values of truth, the good, and beauty confronts the subjects with a plurality of subjects that has to be governed rationally as well as with the urge to transform nature and world by labor. In Wagner's philosophy, the social concerns the dimension of *realizing values*, which in first instance remain inward. Stepping into outwardness involves a collectivity or community of persons. At least this seems to be the case, as for Wagner society contains non-governmental societal forms while at the same time he focuses on economy, civilization, and technology.[69] Wagner also underlines that the state is organized by functions and grants powers according to the rule of distribution of functions,[70] suggesting apparently that the state determines the social order (private sector, public economy, etcetera). Hence, the economy is social too. What, then, makes up the difference between the 'social'-social and the 'economic'-social? The relation between the economic and the social suffers from a lack of determinacy—the social is determined insufficiently. Why not conceive of the social as the realm of our actual existence in the world and our labor? This realm would include the moment of governing interaction between subjects according to freedom as well as the moment of dealing in an effective and efficient way with each other and with nature.[71]

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68   Ibid., p. 316.

69   Ibid., p. 302.

70   Ibid., pp. 310 ff.

71   Wagner's distinction between nature and sociality seems to be reminiscent of Aristotle. However, the distinction appears rather artificial if modern societies are taken into account: realizing values always transforms nature; and economy not only relates to nature but to humans too, as, for example, expressed in the unflattering term 'human resource management'. Instead, the social transpires to function as the overarching concept; economics too is a social science. For Aristotle, as is typical of ancient and medieval philosophy, oeconomia relates to small-scale households. He conceives of economics as the art of household management. The homo oeconomicus is concerned

In addition, Wagner's concept of labor is rather underdetermined too: sometimes it concerns the entire realm of actual existence, then again only the economic dimension of it. Not least, the opposition between 'inwardness' and 'outwardness', and with that the transition from the inner to the outer sphere, so important for Wagner, is not very convincing. The argument fails because of an ambivalent concept of inwardness (and, hence, of the subject): the thoughts of scientists have an outer shape too, as neurophysiological processes, let alone as notes, oral remarks, presentations, publications.[72] Therefore, the social finally proves not to be the sphere of realizing values as such. Strictly speaking, due to the opposition 'inwardness–outwardness' the social is even conceived of as 'instrumental', despite its alleged independence, continuously claimed by Wagner. Still, Wagner's conception clearly shows a tendency to characterize sociality as the realm of actual existence of the subject.

3.3 *Werner Flach's Concept of Sociality*

By contrast, Flach presents a determinate concept of the economic-social.[73] Like Wagner or Rickert, Flach conceives of the social as a constellation of specific interests of validity and, as a consequence, as being related to the idea of radical foundation as well as to the system of philosophy. For Flach too, the idea of the economic-social is based on "actual life" (*tätigen Leben*) and the interests it pursues.[74] Actual life is characterized by a twofold interest: an interest in nature, understood as that which humans need to enable their subsistence, and an interest in the fellow human, as humans live their "monadic-intermonadic" determinacy only together with other humans. Flach underlines the fact that both interests closely hang together. For this reason, he does not speak of several interests but of a twofold interest: the economic-social interest.

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with fulfilling needs (Aristoteles, *Politik*, 4th edn. (München: DTV, 1981), 1252b, 10–15), with the animal nature of humans, unlike the homo politicus, who thinks and acts from the perspective of the community. Here, economy (incl. household management: Ibid., 1255b, 30–34) is a tribute to humans' animal nature, not an expression of truly human interaction.

72   It is not at all surprising that this Wagnerian approach is absent in Flach's *Ideenlehre*. Flach (*Ideenlehre*, p. 152) even criticizes the manner in which Wagner relates labor to the realm of actual existence. He too makes the same point, though with a different accentuation. In general, Wagner's transitions from one realm to another are highly problematic (cf. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 6.1.2.1).

73   Flach, *Ideenlehre*, pp. 137 ff.

74   Ibid., p. 137.

In accord with the fundamental axiotic relation, the economic-social inter-
est is a relation of conditionality and absoluteness: of securing one's subsis-
tence and communitization conditionally on the one hand and of securing
one's subsistence and communitization unconditionally on the other. Flach
conceives of the relation between this conditionality and absoluteness as
of *labor*, that is, "preparation of something useful," regardless of whether of
nature or of fellow humans.[75] Whereas the conditional dimension of the
economic-social represents a wide array of labor for securing one's subsis-
tence and communitization, the absolute dimension represents labor deter-
mined by an idea. The intervention in nature is guided by the idea of utility.
The relations between humans are shaped according to the idea of utility as
well: they are utile relations, finally even relations that are utile for everybody.
The determinant of orientation for dealing with labor guided by the idea is
the interest of establishing the utility of nature and humans, that is to say, the
idea of the utile.[76] The economic-social world consists of the economic and
the social. Both hang together in the sense that mastering nature and com-
munitization go hand in hand; the economic and the social interest, economy
and community (collectivity) are two sides of the same coin, that is, of labor.[77]
The economic-social world makes up a whole of principles of two interrelated
dimensions. These concern different accentuations, not different spheres of
phenomena.

In the course of mastering nature, communitization becomes essential for
humans more and more: human beings increasingly understand themselves as
a part of human society. Socialization is self-formation of labor too.[78] For Flach,
the validity principles of economization and communitization as principles of
labor are the fundamental values of the economic-social realm. As fundamen-
tal values, they are the defining moments of the idea of the *utile*. With these
values, several empirical scientific disciplines obtain a uniform foundation:
they make up the "categorical framework" of economics and the other social
sciences.[79] The characteristics of the fundamental economic-social values are

75   Ibid., pp. 137 f. Flach, Ibid., p. 149, refers for his concept of labor to Marx' concept of labor
      as producing world by the subject. He reproaches Wagner for linking labor to the realm of
      actual existence without taking the ideas of truth, the good, and the beautiful adequately
      into account; this results in identifying labor with instrumental action (Ibid., p. 152),
      instead of bringing off its unconditional character (also see Flach's criticism of Gehlen:
      Ibid., p. 154).

76   Ibid., pp. 138 f.

77   Ibid., pp. 139 ff.

78   Ibid., p. 140.

79   Ibid., pp. 140 f. with 144 and 156.

therefore twofold: the philosophy of the economic-social addresses labor as production and calculation as well as consumption and welfare.[80] More precisely, it eventuates in the economic-social fundamental values of economic and social profitability (*Ergiebigkeit*), sustainability (*Nachhaltigkeit*), and favorability (*Einträglichkeit*). Furthermore, the concept of labor leads to subordinated concepts, like those of right, the state, and politics.[81]

In sum, reconstructing sociality in the Kantian tradition of transcendental philosophy tends to result in a concept of the social as the realm of realizing values (determinants of orientation for subjects). Realizing values takes place within a plurality of subjects. It is guided by a particular set of principles, that is to say, determined by an independent realm of values. Flach in particular conceives of the social as a proportion of conditionality and absoluteness, enabling it, in principle, to show that this realm of validity is truly genuine and independent: it exhibits the route from conditional to unconditional communitization, to a communitization that is eventually utile for everybody. It therefore leads to a free, self-determined communitization of the subject.

4   Conclusion: The Social in Hegel's Philosophy

On the basis of the insights gained by exploring the tradition of Kantian transcendental philosophy, it becomes clear how to conceive of the social in Hegel's philosophy, how it differs from Kantian transcendental philosophy, and how to appreciate it against the Kantian background.

4.1   *Objective Spirit*

If the social is essentially the realm of realizing values and with that of actualizing the orienting determinants of the subject, then we are dealing with Hegel's realm of *objective spirit*: the social is the entire realm of the spirit which knows and wants itself as free, makes its essence to its determination and its purpose, actualizing itself in an externally found objectivity, and hence, determining the world. The spirit, which is the individual subject, is in the world at one with itself: it is a free spirit.[82] Within the philosophy of subjective spirit, the development of the free spirit concerns the relation to itself. Therefore, no subject is constituted, let alone a plurality of subjects: the subject first is the result of the process of development (constitution) of subjective spirit. This development

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80   Ibid., p. 141.

81   Ibid., pp. 114 f. with 152 and 156.

82   *E* §§ 482 ff.

starts with (subjective) spirit "in itself" as "soul" or "nature spirit," progresses to (subjective) spirit "for itself" as "consciousness," and ends with (subjective) spirit in and for itself as "spirit that determines itself, as subject for itself,"[83] as a subject of theoretical and practical activity. Spirit finally becomes a free spirit.[84] The subsequent philosophy of objective spirit discusses free spirit objectifying itself to a spiritual world. In the course of this process, the subject gradually makes the world adequate to itself; as a consequence, "freedom" becomes present as "necessity." In this form of its activity and its product(s), spirit is "objective," that is to say, producing a spiritual world and actualizing freedom in reality.[85] It is not before objective spirit that we are dealing with a plurality of subjects.[86] They all have turned the existence of their freedom to their own end.[87]

Objectifying free spirit results, for Hegel, in the figures of (abstract) right, morality, and *Sittlichkeit*.[88] These are figures of objective spirit and as such conditions of free spirit, and thus, figures of freedom. With Honneth, they could be called social conditions of actualizing individual self-realization or of free spirit.[89]

As in Kantian transcendental philosophy, for Hegel too the social is a whole of conditions of realizing freedom qua self-determination of the subject in an externally found objectivity. Through individuating the actualizing free will, the 'external material' is transformed by freedom; as a result, freedom—in the figures of (abstract) right, morality, and *Sittlichkeit*—is brought into the world. In accordance with its fundamental axiotic relation, Kantian transcendental philosophy achieves an encompassing concept of freedom of the subject and of culture as objectification of free endeavors, transcending common deter-

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83   Ibid., § 387.

84   Ibid., cf. § 385.

85   Ibid., § 385.

86   Cf. Ibid., §§ 485 ff.

87   Absolute spirit is free spirit too, hence volition—however, in the philosophy of absolute spirit (Ibid., §§ 553 ff.), volition is not the issue; the issue is the self-knowledge of the idea as spirit in the figures of art, religion, and philosophy.

88   Cf. Ibid., § 487.

89   A. Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit: Eine Reaktualisierung der Hegelschen Rechts-philosophie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001), pp. 16 ff., 34, understands Hegel's philosophy of right as about the "intersubjective" conditions of individual self-realization or autonomy. He also speaks of "societal" conditions that are necessary for actualizing the 'free will' of the individual (Ibid., p. 31) and of "social conditions" of individual self-realization (Ibid., pp. 32, 35) or self-determination (Ibid., p. 33).—However, of "communicative" conditions too (Ibid., pp. 28 ff., 35, etc.), a determination not very close to Hegel.

minations of freedom like the practical, volition, or action. Hegel, by contrast, seems to restore the fundamental axiotic relation to the 'practical', hence, 'ethicizing' objective freedom: he takes self-determination primarily as volition and discusses the objectification of free spirit within the context of right as existence of freedom. Traditional concepts like 'practical', 'volition', or 'right' obtain a prominent position in Hegel's philosophy of spirit. Yet this impression is false as already pointed out. The practical moment of free spirit—consisting of the moments of theoretical *and* practical spirit—concerns spirit that knows itself as the determining factor of the content. As a consequence, the practical moment makes up a general characteristic of determination. Although Hegel uses traditional terms in addressing this general characteristic, it obtains a meaning that goes beyond the specific (restricted) practical context.[90]

4.2 *Natural Determinacy and Spirit*

The fundamental axiotic relation, as a relation between conditionality and absoluteness, also contains aspects of the conditionality of the subject or free spirit. Part of these aspects is its natural determinacy. Whereas Rickert distinguishes 'values of life' from 'cultural values', that is to say, from values that have their validity in themselves, not for an other, for Wagner and Flach it is decisive too that humans act under interests of life. All these philosophers show that despite its natural determinacy, the subject is capable of self-formation on the basis of an unconditional ground. Admittedly, the beginning of objective spirit is free spirit, spirit that knows and wants itself in its self-determining competence. Nevertheless, the doctrine of natural determinacy is part of Hegel's philosophy of spirit too. The free spirit is the result of a development accomplished in the philosophy of subjective spirit. In the philosophy of spirit, spirit first is as in-itself or immediate spirit nature, "nature spirit" ("soul");[91] thereafter, spirit becomes for itself and hence *self-referential.* Spirit as nature spirit is treated by Hegel in his "Anthropology."[92] It is important to see that the natural determinacy of spirit does not yet characterize the spirit as a subject (of theoretical and practical activity, free spirit) but merely becomes a part

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90 See for this in detail, C. Krijnen, 'Metaphysik in der Realphilosophie Hegels? Hegels Lehre vom freien Geist und das axiotische Grundverhältnis kantianisierender Transzendentalphilosophie', in M. Gerhard, A. Sell and L. de Vos (eds.), *Metaphysik und Metaphysikkritik in der Klassischen Deutschen Philosophie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2012), pp. 171–210.

91 *Enz* § 387.

92 Ibid., §§ 388–412.—The natural determinacy of an organism, and spirit is always an organism too, has been addressed in the philosophy of nature (see, among others, Ibid., § 367, on the process of genus formation and Ibid., § 369, on the sex relation).

of spirit in the sense of a subject. Hence, on this level of elaboration, we are not dealing with social relations—videlicet relations between subjects (as free spirits)—but with natural moments of subjects. Hegel's philosophy therefore does indeed contain a natural, even an animal-human foundation of sociality.[93]

4.3   *Self-Formation versus Self-Knowledge*

With this natural determinacy of the subject, it becomes apparent that Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy each have a different approach for forming philosophical concepts. Whereas Hegel conceptualizes the system of philosophy (that is, the whole of philosophical determinations) as a process of self-determination of the (absolute) idea, in Kantian transcendental philosophy the fundamental relation is an axiotic one. This leads to an important methodological difference between philosophical systems following a Kantian setting and Hegel's setting: the difference between *self-formation* of the subject and *self-knowledge* of the idea. This difference results in an alternative division of the system of philosophy and, consequently, to different determinations of the parts of this system. Although the approaches of both Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy are, in a radical way, committed to the problem of self-knowledge of thought, only in Hegel's philosophy does self-knowledge become the basic principle that structures the order of the system itself. The Kantian model leads to a philosophical system that 'culturalizes' reality, while the Hegelian model leads to a philosophical system that 'idealizes' it. For Hegel, the social would therefore not just be a realizing condition of freedom qua self-determination of the subject in an externally found objectivity, but it should be also conceived of in terms of its function for self-knowledge.[94]

Admittedly, for determining the social as a realizing condition of the self-determination of the subject, the methodological difference mentioned did not play a decisive role (strictly speaking, we considered the social rather 'abstractly'). It is obvious, however, that differences in the order of the philosophical system will lead to different determinations, relations, and justifications of the subject matter at hand, namely the social. Significant differences are apparent even within Kantian transcendental philosophy, for instance regarding the position of right, let alone between Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy.

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93   That is why it is superfluous to reproach Hegel for not including 'life', as Dilthey and other philosophers of life deemed relevant: Hegel thinks nature and spirit are intertwined in spirit.

94   Cf. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 4.2.3.

CHAPTER 4

Social Reality as Existence of Freedom—Hegelian versus Kantian Idealism on Actualizing Validity

1   What Makes Up Actualizing Freedom?

Tracing the concept of sociality in Kantian transcendental philosophy and in Hegel's speculative idealism, leads to intricate problems. These result from the fact that, seen from the perspective of a history of the problems of philosophy, the concept of the social is colored 'practically'. It was not before the emergence of the social sciences in the course of the nineteenth century that a scientific urge arose to clarify the particular objectivity of the social. This clarification led to differentiating the social as a genuine, *specific* realm of meaning, hence, detaching the social from its traditional place: the 'practical'. Against this background, we have seen in chapter three that the beginning of social philosophy can be located in the philosophical direction that dominated the last third of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth: neo-Kantianism.

It was particularly the South-West school of neo-Kantianism that developed a conception of the social that, from a systematic point of view, turned out to play a decisive role in conceptions of sociality in contemporary transcendental philosophy. Although Rickert identifies the social with the practical, he also surpasses this identification: he finally reaches a broader and more comprehensive meaning of the social. There turns out to be a dimension of *all* values having a social determinacy: the dimension of *realizing* values (that is, of shaping reality according to values). This production of culture is a result of a real subject that realizes values. A subject realizing validity and by doing so producing cultural goods is a person in the broad sense of the word. The social, then, is shown to be a condition of realization of validity, of producing culture, regardless of whether the values involved are 'social' or 'asocial' values. Sociality, as the relation between persons, is a *condition of realization of values*.

This determination of the social reflects a constellation that is most fundamental to Rickert's system of philosophy: the fundamental axiotic relation. The South-West school of neo-Kantianism in particular emphasized that normative constraints constitute the foundation of the whole human world: the various realms of culture—science, morals, right, art, religion, etcetera—all are specifications of the fundamental axiotic relation. All are characterized by a(n) (objective) normative constraint that leads human endeavors. The

fundamental axiotic relation is a relation between value, valuing subject, and cultural good. This value-oriented self-formation of the subject eventually concerns values that intrinsically or immanently belong to its own subjectivity, and hence, to its freedom: autonomous, intrinsic values. Therefore, the concept of self-formation concerns the value determinacy as such of the subject. As a realizing condition of values, the subject is itself a real subject, and a real subject is a subject among other subjects, part of a plurality of subjects.

If the social is essentially the realm of realizing values or validity, then—to speak in terms of Hegel's philosophy of spirit—reason, and hence freedom, becomes actual or comes into existence (*Dasein*).[1] Hegel's realm of right is exactly this realm of the existence of freedom.[2] This entails a broad concept of right, a concept of right in which the will is conceived of as ἐνέργεια (actuality), or, to put it in another way, as the being-at-work of freedom or as coming into being of spirit by its self-determination according to reason. In conformity with this broad concept of right, the concept of right as the existence of the free will, that is, the will that has made freedom its *"inner* determination and purpose,"* has to be actualized in an "*externally* found objectivity" and, consequently, the concept of freedom to be realized in the "external objective side," bringing itself to fulfilment as the "idea."[3] This development starts with "abstract right"[4] as the existence of freedom of the actual free will in individual persons who put their will in objects that are external to them.[5] At the beginning of Hegel's elaborations on abstract right, we are dealing with the case of *free spirit that is maximally external to itself* (to put it differently, the spirit, which was the final figure of the philosophy of subjective spirit). A process of conceptual development begins. It starts with the free will in its 'immediate' figure (abstract right); then it enters into a figure 'reflected in itself' (morality), and subsequently, in the realm of object spirit—that is regarding the volitional aspect of free spirit—it ends in a "substantial" will, in which subjectivity and objectivity are reconciled (*Sittlichkeit*).[6]

Although both Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy hold the social to be a condition of actualizing freedom, they develop significantly different concepts of that condition. Which of them offers a more adequate concept of the social, and hence, comprehends better what the existence of

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1 *E* § 482.

2 Ibid., §§ 483 ff.

3 Ibid., §§ 483 f.

4 Ibid., § 487.

5 Ibid., §§ 488 ff.

6 Ibid., § 487.

freedom is? This is the final question of this chapter. The first question takes its starting point in the sketched structure of the social in abstract right, morality, and *Sittlichkeit.* Compared to this order, the division of sociality in Kantian transcendental philosophy is strikingly heterogeneous, as may be illustrated by the position of the sphere of 'right', that is to say, right not in the sense of the existence of reason sui generis but in a narrow sense as a particular existence of governing relationships of choice (*Willkür*) in its outer use. Whereas in neo-Kantianism right is part of *practical* philosophy,[7] contemporary transcendental philosophers like Wagner and Flach decidedly and explicitly distance themselves from the tradition and position right primarily within the sphere of *utility.*[8] This observation immediately implies several fundamental questions, which shall be discussed in what follows. What is homogeneous in Kantian transcendental philosophy, however, is that philosophy is conceptualized as a philosophy of realms of validity and consequently as a philosophy that deals with the way humans shape themselves and the world they live in— philosophy is a *philosophy of realms of culture* (realms of validity, ideas, values).[9]

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7   Cf. W. Windelband, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, 3rd edn. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1923), § 15, esp. pp. 321 ff.; J. Cohn, *Wertwissenschaft* (Stuttgart: Fromanns, 1932), § 88; H. Rickert, *System der Philosophie: Erster Teil: Allgemeine Grundlegung der Philosophie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1921), p. 330; H. Rickert, *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung: Eine logische Einleitung in die historischen Wissenschaften*, 5. verb. u. erw. Aufl. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1929), pp. 721 ff., esp. 724; H. Rickert, *Grundprobleme der Philosophie: Methodologie, Ontologie, Anthropologie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1934), pp. 188 ff.; B. Bauch, 'Ethik', in P. Hinneberg (ed.), *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, 3rd edn. (Berlin, Leipzig, 1924), Teil 1, Abt. 6, pp. 239–75, at pp. 266 ff.; B. Bauch, *Grundzüge der Ethik* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1935), pp. 212 ff.

8   H. Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*, 3rd edn. (Würzburg: Reinhardt, 1980), § 28, esp. pp. 301 f., with 306 ff. and 81 f.; W. Flach, *Grundzüge der Ideenlehre: Die Themen der Selbstgestaltung des Menschen und seiner Welt, der Kultur* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1997), chap. 6, esp. pp. 144 with 152 and 85.

9   Cf. C. Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn: Eine problemgeschichtliche und systematische Studie zu den Prinzipien der Wertphilosophie Heinrich Rickerts* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001); C. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System: Prinzipientheoretische Untersuchungen zum Systemgedanken bei Hegel, im Neukantianismus und in der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008). For W. Windelband, 'Über die gegenwärtige Lage und Aufgabe der Philosophie (1907)', in *Präludien: Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*, 5th edn., 2 vols. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1915), II, pp. 1–23, at p. 2, for example, the "essence of philosophy" is its focus on an ideal of "self-understanding of the deepest motives of all cultural life," determining its "fundamental unity" in a "conceptual form." With his *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, Cassirer intended to develop Kant's "critique of pure reason" into a "critique of culture" (E. Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen. Teil 1: Die Sprache*, 10. Aufl. (Nachdr. d. 2. Aufl.) (Darmstadt:

In this chapter, I shall first address the neo-Kantian turn away from an architectonic of reason that is oriented towards faculties of the *Gemüt* to an architectonic oriented towards culture. It will become clear that certain realms of culture—namely the realm of morality, so important for the idea of realizing validity—obtain a special position that encroaches upon other realms of culture. Therefore, it needs to be clarified in what sense cultural realms are facts at hand: does neo-Kantian validity reflection nolens volens becomes distorted into a crypto-ontic? (2)

Although this suspicion can be dispersed, the neo-Kantian conception still implies problems with regard to the division of the system, which are relevant for the concept of realizing validity. They become apparent from an in-depth analysis of South-West neo-Kantianism and its further development of Fichte's primacy of practical reason. The primacy of practical reason is transformed into a fundamental axiotic relation and hence is modelled into a primacy of self-formation. How, then, is something like 'practical' philosophy still possible? Whereas on the one hand the effort to axiotize the practical aims to overcome the opposition between theoretical and practical reason, this opposition finally returns again in a sublimated form, even taking the practical into account as the dimension of realizing validity (3).

In this context, attention can be called to an equivocal concept of subjectivity and with that of realization. Furthermore, Hegel's speculative model of *self-knowledge* overcomes the opposition between 'theoretical and practical', so influential in history and dominant in Kant's philosophy too. This results in a conception of realization that differs significantly from the model of *self-formation* guiding Kantian transcendental philosophy. To begin with, the suggested equivocation should be explored more closely. The subject is used as the intentional factor of validity as well as the factor that realizes validity. The practical remains an enigma (4).

Apparently, in the system of philosophy more complex relations are presupposed with regard to realizing validity. These relations should be rendered explicit (5). One constellation of problems concerns the position of what are called conditional values, extrinsic values (*Bedingungswerte*), mere civilization. In neo-Kantianism, this type of value determinacy is held to have an instrumental meaning for unconditional, intrinsic, autonomous values, that is, cultural values in the narrow, proper sense (*Eigenwerte*). Whereas in

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Wiss. Buchges., 1994), p. 11). In this process from reason to culture, Kant is of particular importance, regarding both the theme and the method of philosophy. H. Rickert, *Kant als Philosoph der modernen Kultur: Ein geschichtsphilosophischer Versuch* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1924), correspondingly, presented Kant as the 'philosopher of modern culture'.

neo-Kantianism the value 'utility' is located on the level of conditional values and connoted negatively, in later Kantian transcendental philosophy, namely that of Wagner and Flach, the idea of the utile and with it the idea of the economic-social realm is conceptualized as an autonomous sphere of values or ideas. Hegel treats this sphere in the context of his philosophy of objective spirit, therefore, as a shape of the free spirit, rejecting too the neo-Kantian opposition between intrinsic and extrinsic values. A complicating factor in this opposition between intrinsic and extrinsic values is that the neo-Kantians conceptualize realizing values also in terms of validity of values and realizing values, that is to say, in terms of a more general architectonic of the system of values. It will become clear that realizing validity as the actuality, reality, or existence of freedom is too complex to be determined sufficiently within the context of the fundamental axiotic relation, characteristic of Kantian transcendental philosophy (5.1). This result paves the way for discussing Hegel's concept of actualizing freedom, especially concerning the idea of actualization in the philosophy of objective spirit, videlicet the philosophy of right (5.2).

The attained insights allow a confrontation between Kantian transcendental philosophy and Hegel's speculative idealism regarding the existence of freedom: regarding the position of right, of conditional values in realizing freedom, and of the monism of Hegel's doctrine of the idea that belongs to realizing freedom. Hegel's monism of the idea enables a uniform development and differentiation of freedom, overcoming the abstractness of the relation between the several realms of ideas in Kantian transcendental philosophy and leading to a determinate concept of realizing validity. Kant's architectonic of theoretical and practical reason is certainly a starting point for Kantian transcendental philosophy's advancement of philosophy and Hegel's too. However, the relation between theoretical and practical reason in post-Kantian idealism gains a level of complexity that, as far as the problem of realizing validity is concerned, makes it impossible simply to repeat Hegel's criticism of Kant's architectonic of reason (6).

2   Cultural Realms as 'Facts at Hand'?

In the early phase of the development of neo-Kantianism, or, to be more precise, in the philosophical conceptions of the first leaders of the Marburgian and the South-West school, Cohen and Windelband, the division of the several realms of meaning was oriented towards an older tradition, dominating Kant's architectonic too: the division of reason into three powers or faculties of the *Gemüt.*

For later neo-Kantians like Rickert, Cassirer, Bauch, or Cohn, this division no longer suffices and the same applies to contemporary transcendental philosophers like Wagner and Flach.[10] All these thinkers conceptualize the realms of reason as realms of *culture,* dividing culture according to 'values' or 'ideas'.

This orientation not towards the achieving (performing) of the subject, the act (νόησις), but towards the achieved (performed), the content (νόημα), and hence, towards realms of culture, might suggest that realms of culture have a separable existence of their own (*vorliegende Kulturgebiete*) that functions as the object to be analyzed by philosophical reflection. However, it is important to resist this suggestion. Otherwise, the validity reflective format of philosophy will be distorted into a crypto-ontology. Therefore, it should be considered in what way realms of culture are 'given' or 'facts at hand'.

They are given, or facts at hand, as *validity claims* and consequently, as realms of meaning. The neo-Kantian *Faktumtheorem* (and the same applies to Kant) does not naively stipulate any validity in order subsequently to extract the principles of this dogmatically stipulated realm of meaning.[11] Just as in

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10   See Cohen, who divided the system of philosophy into knowledge (H. Cohen, *Logik der reinen Erkenntnis* (Berlin: Cassirer, 1902)), volition (H. Cohen, *Ethik des reinen Willens* (Berlin: Cassirer, 1904)), and feeling (H. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls* (Berlin: Cassirer, 1912)), and Windelband's division into autonomous realms of validity according to the 'guideline of the psychology of powers', leading to a trichotomy of the 'life of the soul' (W. Windelband, 'Was ist Philosophie? Über Begriff und Geschichte der Philosophie (1882)', in *Präludien: Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*, 5th edn., 2 vols. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1915), I, pp. 1–54, at pp. 26 f.; W. Windelband, 'Die neuere Philosophie', in P. Hinneberg (ed.), *Die Kultur der Gegenwart* (Berlin, Leipzig, 1909), Teil I, Abt. v, pp. 382–543, at p. 476; Windelband, *Einleitung*, p. 256; W. Windelband, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, 17. Aufl., unv. Nachdr. d. 15., durchges. u. erg. Aufl. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1980), p. 458). Compare by contrast, for instance: Rickert, *System*; Cassirer, *Symbolische Formen I*; E. Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen. Teil 2: Das mythische Denken*, 9th edn. (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges., 1994); E. Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen. Teil 3: Phänomenologie*, 10. Aufl. (Nachdr. d. 2. Aufl.) (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges., 1994); B. Bauch, *Die Idee* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1926); Cohn, *Wertwissenschaft*; Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*; Flach, *Ideenlehre.*—See on this issue Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, chap. 7.3.1.3 with 6.1 and 2.4.2.2.

11   See South-West neo-Kantians like H. Rickert, *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis: Einführung in die Transzendentalphilosophie*, 6. verb. Aufl. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1928), p. 440; Rickert, *System*, p. 320; Rickert, *Grenzen*, p. 701; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, p. 183; Windelband, 'Was ist Philosophie', I, pp. 40 ff.; W. Windelband, 'Kritische oder genetische Methode? (1883)', in *Präludien: Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*, 5th edn., 2 vols. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1915), II, pp. 99–135; Windelband, *Einleitung*, pp. 193 ff.; B. Bauch, *Wahrheit, Wert und Wirklichkeit* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1923), pp. 357 ff.; B. Bauch, *Immanuel*

Kant's philosophy, for neo-Kantianism too the methodical status of the 'fact' is that of a validity claim, a problem, a starting point. Rickert, for instance, conceptualized culture as a value-laden reality. Hence, culture is the place where validity is realized. Accordingly, culture is on the one hand the "empirically given material" and on the other the "object" that needs to be determined conceptually.[12] As Bauch puts it pregnantly, experience is the beginning as well as the end of the transcendental method—the beginning in its reality, the end in its possibility.[13]

If we understand realms of culture as types of validity claims, then we can counter certain objections that stem from the fact that some realms of validity *encroach on other realms*, and, by implication, can hardly be outsourced as one autonomous realm of values among others. These objections do not just hang together with the orientation towards Kant's division of powers of the *Gemüt*. The tripartition of the life of the soul into 'representing' ('thinking'), 'willing', and 'feeling' as well as into the corresponding philosophical disciplines of logic, ethics, and aesthetics, has certainly motivated, for example, Windelband to deny that *religion* has an independent validity qualification. For Windelband, religion makes up a specific sphere of values—the sphere of the holy—but this sphere takes its values from the other spheres, namely the spheres of truth, the good, and the beautiful, and colors them religiously. That is to say, religion relates these values to a supersensible reality. As a consequence, the "total principle of the matter" (*sachliche Gesamtprinzip*) of the philosophy of religion stands "above or behind" the disciplines of logic, ethics, and aesthetics.[14]

Kant, 3rd edn. (Berlin, Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1923), pp. 130 ff. Compare also the Marburgian neo-Kantians. As E. Cassirer, 'Hermann Cohen und die Erneuerung der Kantischen Philosophie', Kant-Studien 17 (1912), 252–82, at 253, correctly notes regarding Cohen (who is commonly assumed to fall victim to the criticism of 'circularity'), that although Cohen takes the fact of science as a starting point, he in turn transforms this factum, with Kant, into a problem. See for the neo-Kantian *Faktumtheorem:* Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 1.3; Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, chap. 7.3.1.

12 Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, p. 161.

13 Bauch, *Kant*, pp. 131 f.; Bauch, *Wahrheit*, pp. 359 f.

14 W. Windelband, 'Das Heilige: Skizze zur Religionsphilosophie (1902)', in *Präludien: Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*, 5th edn., 2 vols. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1915), II, pp. 295–332, at p. 299. See for this approach to religion, Windelband, 'Das Heilige'; W. Windelband, 'Kulturphilosophie und transzendentaler Idealismus (1910)', in *Präludien: Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*, 5th edn., 2 vols. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1915), II, pp. 279–94, at pp. 288 f.; Windelband, *Einleitung*, pp. 390 ff. For a further elaboration, see C. Krijnen, 'Religion als philosophisches Problem:

In fact, concerning the problem of realizing validity, it is most remarkable that the sphere of *moral* values obtains a specific position: although the moral sphere is conceptualized as a part of the system of values, it is characterized (too) by the fact that it encroaches upon other values. In Cohn's philosophy, this even leads to denying that the ethical (moral) value constitutes an autonomous cultural realm, as the moral value in general concerns behavior that is conducted for the sake of its own (intrinsic) validity. Cohn understands 'cultural realm' in a very narrow sense: as a realm that is not only governed by a specific value and that therefore can be isolated "in thought" (making up a pure realm of meaning) but as a realm that likewise can be "factually separated" as a part of culture.[15] Just because the ethical values make up the norm for all action, regardless of the other autonomous values (truth, beauty, etcetera) to which this activity also relates, for Cohn, the moral value does not constitute a cultural realm on its own.[16]

This double position of the moral can be found in Bauch too. Bauch even advocates a primacy of practical reason that relates the ethical value to action as such and to that extent takes the ethical value to be the comprehensive one. For Bauch, the primacy of practical reason means the capability of the practical value to embrace all other values as its species.[17] According to Bauch's "demand of essence" of the principle of ethics, personal behavior towards values is oriented towards the "system of values."[18] The person, however, is not only oriented towards the system of objective values as the system of the factors to be realized. According to Bauch's "demand of volition" of the principle of ethics, which concerns the specific ethical or moral fundamental value and functions as the central principle of ethics, the moral quality of the behavior of the person depends on her will, and therefore on the determination of purposes or ends; this leads Bauch to moral law as the basic law for human behavior. Despite their independence and autonomy of the other realms

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Zur Religionsphilosophie des Neukantianismus und Gideon Spickers', in U. Hoyer and H. Schwaetzer (eds.), *"Eine Religion in philosophischer Form auf naturwissenschaftlicher Grundlage": Gideon Spickers Religionsphilosophie im Kontext seines Lebens, seines Werkes, seine Zeit* (Hildesheim [et al.]: Olms, 2002), pp. 177–202.

15   Cohn, *Wertwissenschaft*, p. 563.

16   Ibid., pp. 564, 623, cf. 318 ff.

17   Bauch, *Wahrheit*, pp. 478 ff.; cf. Bauch, 'Ethik', p. 259; Bauch, *Die Idee*, pp. 167 ff.; Bauch, *Gründzüge der Ethik*, pp. 6, 81 f. See for the primacy of the practical in Bauch's philosophy, C. Krijnen, 'Anerkennung, Wirklichkeit und praktische Vernunft im Neukantianismus', in C. Graf and H. Schwaetzer (eds.), *Das Wirklichkeitsproblem in Metaphysik und Transzendentalphilosophie: Heinrich Barth im Kontext* (Basel: Schwabe, 2014), pp. 15–51.

18   Bauch, *Gründzüge der Ethik*, pp. 102, cf. 95, 106.

of values, all these values are involved in the fundamental ethical value.[19] The realization of values, as Bauch also puts it, the embodiment of values (*Wertdarstellung*), is apparently too complex to be mirrored in a 'system of objective values' that a person aims to realize. The system is determined by relationships of a higher level, transforming the parallelism of cultural realms, and, hence, complicating the idea of realizing validity.

Basically, the criticized double position of the moral can be found in Rickert's philosophy too. His determination of the sphere of the ethical or *Sittlichkeit* shows this in a significant way. For Rickert, in the ethical sphere, the will itself is the cultural good that should be realized by the will of the (concrete) subject: we want 'subjectively' (subject) what is 'objectively' ethical (object, cultural good) for the sake of its ethical character (value). Ethical 'success' therefore is nothing but realizing the ethical attitude (*Gesinnung*) and ethical good the realization of the ethical behavior of the subject or the ethical will itself. As the ethical value does not rest on the "outer *success*" (action including effects) but on the "will" of the subject, the "peculiarity" of the ethical contains the idea that the behavior of the subject, unlike in the contemplative realm of values, cannot be detached from the corresponding cultural good.[20] Apparently, in the sketched constellation, the subject functions on the one hand as an intentional factor, capable of directing itself to values, and on the other hand as a person, who behaves in this or that way and who will, then, be shown to have a certain quality. This quality implies that the will "subjectively ethical" wants the "objective ethical"; to put it in other words, the subjects wants autonomy for autonomous reasons, "autonomously autonomy."[21] For Rickert, such a will is a free will and the free will itself is the central ethical good that needs to be realized. Rickert also calls it the "personality."[22] As the values of the system of values are autonomous values, and hence, values that are intrinsically or immanently part of the subjectivity of the subject, that is of its possibility and capability of self-determination, Rickert's version of the ethical, as in Bauch's and Cohn's, brings the realm of objective values (which is nothing but the realm of freedom) into the dimension of ethical self-determination.

In short, cultural realms certainly have no separable existence of their own. Against this view, other arguments could be launched too: for instance the fact,

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19   As B. Bauch, *Anfangsgründe der Philosophie*, 2nd edn. (Leipzig: Meiner, 1932), p. 117, also points out, because of this relationship to the realm of values, what Kant once called the "basic law of practical reason" does not remain in "abstract isolation."

20   Rickert, *System*, pp. 358–60.

21   Ibid., p. 360.

22   Ibid., pp. 360 f.

emphasized by Rickert, Bauch, Cassirer and others, that concrete phenomena are always constituted by a plurality of values.[23] Culture as the world of synthesis is not separated into elements existing in themselves. By contrast, it is conceptualized as a togetherness of moments of meaning.

3   Practical Philosophy and Realizing Validity

Nevertheless, this conception, as implied, entails problems concerning the division of culture, which not least affect the idea of realizing validity. Several aspects need to be distinguished here.

Firstly, the structure of the system, more specifically its division into realms of meaning, depends on the type of philosophical concept formation from which it results. Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy offer different approaches. Whereas Hegel conceptualizes the system of philosophy as a process of self-determination of the idea, in Kantian transcendental philosophy the fundamental relation is an axiotic one. This leads to an important difference between philosophical systems following a Kantian setting and Hegel's setting: the difference between *self-formation* of the subject and *self-knowledge* of the idea.

Both philosophical approaches are committed to the problem of self-knowledge of thought. Only in Hegel's philosophy, however, does *self-knowledge* turn out to be the basic principle structuring the order of the system itself. Although for the neo-Kantians and later transcendental philosophers the philosophy of knowledge makes up the first and most foundational discipline of philosophy; yet they do not develop self-formation into a self-formation that is self-knowledge, or more precisely, into self-knowledge as the foundational relation of the development of the system of philosophy.[24] Hegel does exactly this. With the absolute idea, the required return into the concept is achieved.

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23   See, for instance, Bauch, *Die Idee*, pp. 214 ff., 230 ff., on the problem of categories of values; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, p. 194, on cultural goods that are bearers of several values; or E. Cassirer, *Wesen und Wirkung des Symbolbegriffs* (*1938*), 8th edn. (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges., 1994), pp. 210 ff.; Cassirer, *Symbolische Formen III*, pp. 232 ff.; E. Cassirer, 'Das Symbolproblem und seine Stellung im System der Philosophie', *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* 21 (1927), 191–208, who makes clear that a sensory experience is not only a bearer of meaning but exemplifies different modalities of worlds of meaning.

24   Insofar as Kantian transcendental philosophy allows a ranking of the realms of validity within the system of philosophy at all, the sphere of religion turns out to be the 'highest' or 'ultimate' sphere of the system.

Such a return into the concept is simply indispensable. The claim of philosophy to be the science of 'totality' rests on it.[25]

The Kantian model leads to a philosophical system that 'culturalizes' reality and the Hegelian model to a philosophical system that 'idealizes' it. For Hegel, the social would, then, not just be a realizing condition of freedom qua self-determination of the subject but has to be conceived of in terms of its function for self-knowledge too.

Secondly, this advantage of Hegel's model focuses on assuring the principles that are specific for the different ways of self-formation of the subject, and hence, for the different realms of culture. The argument has a philosophy-methodical character and insofar it is an abstract argument. Focusing more on the content, it appears that the South-West neo-Kantians, inspired by Fichte, develop Kant's primacy of practical reason into a general primacy of freedom, overcoming the opposition between theoretical and practical reason. Both directions of reason are expressions of freedom. However, by universalizing freedom it becomes unclear what remains of what used to be the *practical* in its specific sense. How, then, is practical philosophy still possible?

The foundational axiotic relation claims to integrate 'theoretical' and 'practical' reason. As knowledge already includes 'recognizing (acknowledging) values',[26] for Rickert, the traditional position, in which theoretical and practical values were opposed to one another, has been overcome.[27] In turn, the primacy of practical reason loses its particular practical format: it is shown to be a primacy of self-formation. Within this self-formation, several 'cultural realms' can be distinguished. This approach, however, confronts us with the problem of the specific determinacy of practical philosophy. An analysis of the practical sphere in South-West neo-Kantianism makes clear that the project to transform practical reason into a value foundation sui generis is a difficult undertaking.[28] Despite all efforts to universalize practical reason into a general concept of reason, the opposition between theoretical and practical reason finally returns in a sublimated form.

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25   See for the relationship between self-formation and self-knowledge C. Krijnen, 'System-philosophie als Selbsterkenntnis: Hegel und der Neukantianismus', in H. F. Fulda and C. Krijnen (eds.), *Systemphilosophie als Selbsterkenntnis: Hegel und der Neukantianismus* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), pp. 113–32; Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 4.

26   Cf. H. Rickert, 'Über logische und ethische Geltung', *Kant-Studien* 19 (1914), 182–221, at 208 ff.; Rickert, *Gegenstand*, pp. 185 f., 434, 438; Rickert, *Grenzen*, pp. 689 ff.

27   Cf. Rickert, *Gegenstand*, p. 438; Rickert, *Grenzen*, p. 689.

28   Cf. Krijnen, 'Praktische Vernunft'.

This sublimated form concerns the distinction between validity of values and realizing values. Although Rickert distinguishes a manifoldness of cultural realms in the system of philosophy, he finally places these realms, for philosophical-systemic reasons, in two main groups. The practical makes up one group; the theoretical, in the widest, etymological sense of θεωρία (observing, contemplating, looking) makes up the other. It transpires, however, that the practical at the same time is taken into account in a meaning sui generis, which thwarts the two-part division of the system. The practical, in the broad meaning of being identical with the social, is shown to be the dimension of realizing values. Because of this relation of '*validity* and *realization* (embodiment)', the practical realm obtains a function that encroaches on the theoretical or contemplative realm. Regarding the dimension of realizing validity a *quasi-primacy of practical reason* occurs. From this point of view, the opposition between the theoretical and the practical, once thought to be too restrictive and which should therefore be subject to counter-argument, eventually has been restored.

In order to achieve this insight, a more precise and complex determination of the subject is required. The subject, which in the logical sense is an *intentional* factor or, so to speak, a subject without flesh and blood that individuates or singularizes (*vereinzelt*) validity, needs to be thought of as a factor of *realizing* validity. As a realizing factor of validity, the subject is a *person*, a real, acting human. Consequently, the social or practical is a condition of realizing values: a reality condition for the realization of validity, a reality presupposition for the emergence of cultural goods.

In the subsequent development of South-West neo-Kantianism, namely in Bauch and Cohn, the impulse we found in Rickert's philosophy becomes effective. That is to say, the impulse to take the practical as the dimension of realizing values and to divide the system of philosophy into a realm of *validity* of values and a realm of *realizing* values, decidedly bringing practical reason into the position of a certain primacy. Bauch, in particular, has tried to use the relation between validity and ethics for a doctrine of the primacy of practical reason. He conceptualizes the ethical value as related to action in its whole extension: to the πράττειν. Insofar as the ethical value functions as an including value, the primacy of practical reason means the capacity of the practical value to contain all other values as its subspecies.[29] As Bauch's elaborations result in the distinction between the validity of values and the realization of values, the *fundamental axiotic relation* comes into play also in Bauch's conception.

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29   Cf. Bauch, *Wahrheit*, pp. 478 ff.; Bauch, *Die Idee*, pp. 167 ff.; Bauch, *Gründzüge der Ethik*, pp. 6, 81 f.

Nevertheless, Bauch presents a division of theoretical and practical reason, of the logical value and the ethical (more specifically the moral) value in the system of values, that transforms the fundamental axiotic relation by *specific* values, which is a new conception compared to Rickert. This does not only result in a primacy of the *truth value* in the system of values but also in a specification of the *moral* as the basic ethical law. For Bauch, the person is the *real subject related to values and realizing values*.[30] Only persons, and hence 'sensible-spiritual' (*sinnlich-geistig*) unities, act *realiter*.[31] Only such unities are capable of relating themselves to values and shaping or 'forming' (*hineinbilden*) the reality by them. Persons are a condition of the possibility to 'objectively make reason real' (*objektive Vernunftversinnlichung*).[32] The person, however, not only relates to the system of objective values as that which needs to be realized. In line with Kant, in particular the *will* of the person, hence the quality of purpose-setting or aim-setting, makes up the moral quality of human behavior. In this manner, for Bauch, the moral law is shown to be the basic law of human behavior.

In Rickert's doctrine of the subject, by contrast, the difference between these two dimensions of subjectivity becomes smudged, that is to say, between the subject as a validity-related entity and as a person, between intentionality (act, subjective meaning) and realizing values. The relation between the autonomy of a specific sphere of values and the subject as an intentional factor ('immanent meaning') on the one hand and the realization of (the content of) values and the subject as a realizing factor on the other is reflected insufficiently (in Kant an analogous problem occurs concerning the relation between spontaneity and freedom).[33] Therefore, the relation between the act of taking position (*Akt der Stellungnahme*) and action (*Handlung*) also remains underdetermined. As a consequence, Rickert has to separate or distinguish the practical via the concept of the social (classical concepts typical of the practical like autonomy, duty, and conscience are no longer available because they have been axiotized). Bauch, on the contrary, specifies the practical strictly via his conception of realization of values.

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30   Bauch, *Gründzüge der Ethik*, pp. 86 f., 94 f., 98 ff.

31   Ibid., p. 98.

32   Ibid., pp. 94 f.

33   Rickert, of course, is aware of their difference, for instance, when he distinguishes action (*Handlung*) from the act of taking position (*Stellungnahme*) (Rickert, *System*, p. 324) as well as social personal freedom from the free autonomous act (Ibid., p. 331), or when he conceptualizes 'real' knowledge as dependent on an 'individual's' will to know, 'real' theoretical knowledge as dependent on a real will (Rickert, *Gegenstand*, pp. 309 f.).

Despite all the polemics of the South-West school against a primacy of practical reason, we can find in Rickert as well as in Bauch a fundamental twofold structure of the system of philosophy: that of the theoretical and the practical. Whereas Rickert takes 'theoretical' in the widest sense of the word as contemplative and 'practical' in its widest sense as active, Bauch succeeds in returning this wide sense of the theoretical and the practical to a narrow one: he argues for both a primacy of theoretical (logical) and of practical reason, the latter even having moral law as its basis. This culminates in a division of the philosophical system into validity (of values) and realizing the validity (values).

The background of the distinction between validity and realization, particularly obvious in Bauch's conception, can be understood as a systematic appropriation of *Kant's architectonic of reason*, at least as far as the practical is concerned. Kant continuously divides philosophy into a theoretical and a practical branch as well as the corresponding objects into nature and freedom. Accordingly, he differentiates between theoretical knowledge and determination of the will as well as between philosophy of nature and philosophy of morals (as the "practical legislation of reason according to the concept of freedom").[34] More precisely, Kant conceptualizes the human intellect as such qua higher cognitive faculty (that is, reason in the wide sense) as the power to think, and, consequently, as the power to judge: thought, for Kant, is a synthesis that emerges in judgment. Both theoretical and practical reason are ways of thought and hence, of judgment: the determination of objects of experience occurs in theoretical judgments, while the determination of the will occurs in practical judgments. It concerns one and the same reason, used in a theoretical direction or in a practical direction.[35] Whereas theoretical reason aims at objects that are *given* from elsewhere—by sensory intuition—practical reason is related to objects that it *creates* itself, as practical reason concerns the determination of the *will.* Corresponding to this view, theoretical reason's relation to an object consists in, as Kant puts it, the "mere determination" of the object, that is, 'theoretical knowledge' of reason. Practical reason, by contrast, is con-

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34   Cf. *KrV* B 868 f., 830; *KpV* A 29; *KdU* V 167 f., 171, 174, 178 f., 416, etc. See for Kant's architectonic also C. Krijnen, 'Teleology in Kant's Philosophy of Culture and History: A Problem for the Architectonic of Reason', in D. Loose (ed.), *The Sublime and its Teleology: Kant, German Idealism, Phenomenology* (Leiden et al.: BRILL, 2011), pp. 115–32; C. Krijnen, 'Kants Kategorien der Freiheit und das Problem der Einheit der Vernunft', in S. Zimmermann (ed.), *Kant und die Kategorien der Freiheit* (Berlin: de Gruyter (forthcoming)).

35   Cf. Kant *KpV* A 31 f., 96 f., 159; *GMS* IV, 391.

cerned with "realizing" its object (in accordance with the knowledge of it), that is, 'practical knowledge' of reason.[36]

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36   Cf. *KpV* A 160 with *KrV* B ix f. and *GMS* iv, 426.—Kant's architectonic of reason suffers from analogous problems analyzed in detail with regard to the philosophy of Rickert, that is to say, an equivocal concept of the subject, as an exploration of the relationship between spontaneity, freedom, and the unity of reason in Kant's philosophy shows (see for this and what follows Krijnen, 'Kants Kategorien der Freiheit'). The a priori division of reason itself into a theoretical and a practical use stems from a mere historical appropriation, not from a transcendental consideration. (Aristotle prepared the way for dividing philosophy into the theoretical and the practical, and the realms (objects) of philosophy into nature and freedom. These distinctions were picked up in German philosophy during the eighteen century (Wolff) and became a guiding factor too for Kant's thoughts about the system of philosophy.) Kant differentiates in a way that forces him to thematize the active, achieving dimension of human behavior (also part of, for example, theoretical or aesthetical knowledge) primarily, and mainly, within a 'practical' context. An all-embracing concept of freedom fails (although Kant addresses certain aspects of such a concept). However, due to the determinacy of the theoretical subject through the law of (theoretical) validity, made explicit by Kant in his theoretical philosophy—hence, by another causality than that of nature—the theoretical and the practical cannot be defined against each other, as Kant actually does. To put it differently, Kant's opposition between theoretical and practical reason is not complete enough to make up the unity that is reason. Indeed, for German idealism and its successors, the search for a concept of freedom that underlies Kant's opposition between the theoretical and the practical is a major concern. From a systematic point of view, Kant does not sufficiently get a grip on the intrinsic relationship between reason and freedom because he leaves the concept of the subject as an agent, as an active moment, too implicit, enabling all kinds of subsequent efforts to render that relationship, and with that the active dimensions of reason, explicit in a way that transforms Kant's transcendental philosophy, for example by a Fichtean 'primacy of practical reason' or a Hegelian 'self-movement of the concept'. Kant's texts, however, offer systematic possibilities to construct an overarching concept of freedom. For this, among others, the activity of the subject should be distinguished in a way we have seen in the analysis of Rickert's philosophy. In the logical sense, the subject as an active subject is an *intentional* factor that individuates or singularizes validity, in contrast to the subject as an active subject that functions as the factor that *realizes* validity. Hence, the subject individuates validity in a logical and a real dimension, both effective in any realm of meaning. Differing from Rickert's conception but in the line of Bauch, Kant conceives of practical reason in its particularity as a power that does not 'merely', like theoretical reason, 'determine' its object but that, unlike theoretical reason, 'also establishes its reality'. The practical dimension relates to the determinacy of the subject by freedom in the Kantian sense. Here, the self-formation of the subject is at issue; an issue that, for Kant, finally is moral in nature. Any goal-setting, our striving for theoretical or aesthetical knowledge, or whatever, as goal-setting, is subjected to the moral law. Yet this moral

Hegel, however, overcomes this old and influential architectonic of reason, oriented towards the opposition 'theoretical–practical'.[37] Taking up essential features of this opposition, he develops a division of the system of philosophy not so much in terms of cultural realms as in terms of logic, nature, and spirit as dimensions of the absolute idea. Consequently, Hegel achieves a conception of self-determination as self-knowledge in the sense of a self-realization of the concept. As a result, the relation between validity and realization obtains a format that differs significantly from the model of self-formation offered by the Kantian tradition of transcendental philosophy. In order to clarify the division of the system of philosophy, it is important to confront these different formats with each other. In doing so, the dimension of, in Hegel's parlance, the free will, and hence reason that gives existence to itself, should take center stage—the dimension of right and its philosophy or the philosophy of objective spirit. Therefore, clarifying the idea of realizing also leads to a clarification of the principles of dividing the social.

4   An Equivocal Concept of Realization

On the basis of the analysis above, regarding the neo-Kantian approach, we can diagnose an equivocal concept of realization or to put it differently, of the subject.

On the one hand, realization or the subject as realization instance is conceived of as an intentional factor, regardless of the values it realizes. The subject as the intentional ground is effective both in the theoretical and in the practical realm (notwithstanding that the logical structure of theoretical and practical intentions differ, making acts into theoretical or practical acts). As an intentional subject, the subject initially is merely a correlative moment in the fabrics of the laws of validity. As such a moment, it is the factor that

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dimension of actualizing validity does not affect the independent normativity of other spheres of reason. Practical normativity applies to the relationship to normativity of the subject as a realizing factor of validity, not to the validity laws of other spheres of reason themselves. Hegel, of course, aims to overcome Kant's opposition between theoretical and practical philosophy as such and to sublate it in a higher, more original unity of reason.

37   See on this H. F. Fulda, 'Hegels Logik der Idee und ihre epistemologische Bedeutung', in C. Halbig, M. Quante and L. Siep (eds.), *Hegels Erbe* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004), pp. 78–137, and C. Krijnen, 'Recognition: Future Hegelian Challenges for a Contemporary Philosophical Paradigm', in C. Krijnen (ed.), *Recognition: German Idealism as an Ongoing Challenge* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2014), pp. 99–127.

logically accomplishes validity: the subject is the logical function of individuating or singularizing validity. If we conceive of the subject for this reason as free (and not just acting accidentally), then we can recognize a *logical* dimension of the existence of freedom. After all, the subject must be determinable by a determinacy other than that of nature (in particular by validity). In Rickert's philosophy, for example, the structure of such an intentionality could be conceived of, firstly, in terms of the fundamental axiotic relation and its determination that behavior of subjects is guided by values. Secondly, the issue would be the types of behavior of the subject, resulting from the differences between values.—Again, a look at Kant's architectonic of reason is illuminating in this respect. Theoretical reason deals with 'given' objects, whereas practical reason strives to 'make its objects real'. Theoretical knowledge ('experience') is characterized by a receptive relation to its object, while practical knowledge ('willing') is characterized as an active, creative relation to its object. From a systematic point of view, in Rickert such determinations return. The relation of the subject towards values is conceptualized as either active ('outer action', 'deed') or contemplative ('inner action', 'consideration'). Within the contemplative-material sphere of validity, the content becomes a 'matter' (*Sache*), retaining its independency; hence, the form *embraces* the content.[38] In the active-personal realm of validity, by contrast, the content loses its independence with respect to the form—the will, to be more precise, the capacity of choice (*Willkür*) should be shaped ethically.[39] Hence, the form *penetrates* the content.[40]

Be that as it may. From this determination of the subject with regard to the structure of its logical act (*Akt*) or intentionality, we have to distinguish another determination of 'subject': the subject as *realizing instance* of validity. For such a realizing instance, and hence, for any self-determination of the concrete, real subject, the subject as intentional factor is presupposed. The relation between these two concepts of the subject has a foundational character; they are anything but alternatives on the same level of subject determinacy. Kant, to refer to him again, accordingly discusses the subject within the practical realm concerning the *grounds of its self-determination*, that is, concerning the way the subject is determined by validity; as Kant puts it, concerning the grounds of

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38   Rickert, *System*, pp. 366 f.

39   Ibid., p. 367.

40   Ibid., p. 368. See for Rickert's conception, Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, chap. 7.3.2.2.2.

setting ends.[41] This results in a specific type of law of validity: practical validity. In the parlance of Rickert, Bauch, and Cohn, the subject is a person, an active, acting human being. The production or creation of cultural goods is, as a real process, always production or creation by a real subject, that is by a person. As a reality condition, the person is a necessary presupposition for the emergence of cultural goods, that is, a *reality condition of culture.* Hence, we can distinguish a second level of the existence of freedom.

This amalgamation of two concepts of freedom or of the subject, and hence, of two concepts of realization, does indeed give rise to a problematic position of the practical in the system of philosophy. The South-West school of neo-Kantianism is eager to model what used to be the 'primacy of practical reason' into an encompassing primacy of value determinacy, in other words, of encompassing freedom, of a pervasive primacy of self-formation. The practical realm in its particularity, then, becomes problematic within the system of philosophy.[42]

5   Realizing Validity as a Complex Issue: Contested Utility

Apparently, with regard to the idea of realizing validity, in the South-West conception of the system of philosophy relationships are presupposed that remain implicit, rather than being rendered explicit. One of these presuppositions will be scrutinized in what follows, not least because it has been treated very differently in subsequent transcendental philosophy. It seems that a Hegelian turn is taken here, which, in turn, enables us to initiate a discussion on Hegel.

The neo-Kantian conception of realms of values distinguishes levels of values or validity in a manner that seems, at first sight, prosperous. On second sight, however, the idea of realizing values is grasped insufficiently. I mean the relation between what are called *intrinsic values* (*Eigenwerte*, autonomous values, objective values, unconditional values) and *extrinsic values* (*Bedingungswerte*, values of life, conditional values, subjective values, values of civilization). Intrinsic values stand for cultural values in the narrow, proper sense; extrinsic values are held to have an instrumental meaning for intrinsic values: they are realization conditions of intrinsic values, mere means for realizing them.

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41   Kant conceives of the will as the "capacity of ends" (*KpV* A 103) and determines the faculty of desire even as the power to "become by means of its representations the cause of the actual existence of the objects of these representations" (*KpV* A 16 note).

42   Cf. Krijnen, 'Praktische Vernunft'.

Whereas in neo-Kantianism the value 'utility' is located on the extrinsic level, and hence, connoted rather negatively, in the subsequent transcendental philosophy of Wagner and Flach the idea of the *utile*, and with it the sphere of the economic-social, is conceived of as an autonomous sphere of values or ideas. Hegel deals with this sphere in his philosophy of objective spirit, and hence, as a shape of the free spirit. Consequently, he too rejects the neo-Kantian opposition between intrinsic and extrinsic values. This opposition becomes even more complicated, as the neo-Kantians determine the realization also in terms of the architectonic of validity of values and realization of values.

5.1   *Realization of Validity: From the Conditional to the Unconditional Realm*

(a) Rickert explored the relation between life and culture, and their respective values, in several studies. This exploration culminates in a model that also guides the other members of the South-West school.[43] Crucial is the distinction between several levels of validity. For example, Rickert distinguishes "individual subjective values" from "general subjective values," and this whole group of subjective values from "objective values."[44] Likewise, he operates with the distinction between "extrinsic values" and "intrinsic values"[45] or "values of life or civilization" and "values of culture."[46] These distinctions aim to give structure to the human world by means of distinguishing conditional and unconditional validity, while at the same time offering an all-around estimation of the constitutive moments of that world.

The influential doctrine of conditional and unconditional validity is, in modern philosophy, prefigured in Kant's philosophy: Kant has seen sharply that within the whole of values there are not only claims regarding unconditional (objective) validity (or values) at stake but also claims regarding conditional (subjective) validity (or values).[47] In addition, in German history, the

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43   See for Rickert's model, Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn*, chap. 7.3.1.2.

44   Rickert, *System*, pp. 132 ff., cf. Rickert, *Gegenstand*, p. 235.

45   Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 167 ff.

46   Ibid., pp. 170 ff.; cf. H. Rickert, 'Lebenswerte und Kulturwerte', *Logos* 2 (1911), 131–66.

47   Compare Kant's aesthetics, distinguishing the beautiful (unconditional) from the pleasant (conditional). See his practical philosophy, for which distinctions between categorical and hypothetical imperatives, the moral-practical and the technical-practical, the good and the utile, etcetera, are leading. And when we take into account that in the theoretical sphere opinion (δόξα) has no independent status versus knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and nor does the judgment of 'perception' (*Wahrnehmungsurteil*) versus the judgment of 'experience' (*Erfahrungsurteil*), we can grasp the distinction between conditional and unconditional validity also in the realm of theoretical reason.

distinction between culture and civilization has obtained an important function for cultural criticism, also in neo-Kantianism. The negative stance towards civilization that goes along with this distinction is, however, not contained in the etymology of culture (*cultura*) and civilization (*civis, civitas*). Yet also in this respect we can find pre-figurations in Kant, at least concerning the issue at hand. For Kant, human history is shown to be the development of human freedom in a disciplining process of cultivating, civilizing, and moralizing, that is, a process that advances enlightenment and, finally, culminates in a cosmopolitan situation.[48] According to Kant, these ways in which humans shape themselves and the world they live in are in no way of the same worth, even though the opposition between a merely economic-technical civilization and a spirit-laden culture is alien to him (Kant even places civilization higher than culture (in his meaning of these terms, of course).

Before going into the distinctions mentioned, it is important to note from the start three different issues: First, the distinction between different levels of validity first and foremost enables the *determination* of conditional validity as such, that is to say, conditional validity in its conditionality. The conditional realms of validity, therefore, are coordinated by the realms of unconditional validity (and the philosophical disciplines that address them). Second, the

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48   Although Kant is not entirely consistent in his use of the notions cultivating, civilizing, and moralizing throughout his work, the idea is still clear. In the "seventh proposition" of the *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, he distinguishes between culture, civilization, and morality, the latter being higher than civilization. Morality is directed towards the "morally-good conviction" (*moralisch-gute Gesinnung*) as the nucleus of the "good" (*AA* VIII, 26). Civilization and morality are both part of culture here (culture comprehends all possible goal-setting). In *Über Pädagogik* (*AA* IX, 449 f.), Kant distinguishes between disciplining (taming "animality"), cultivating (skill to set "arbitrary" goals), civilizing (suited to what is common in society), and moralizing (not just skilled to set arbitrary goals or to be in accord with what is comme-il-faut but equipped with the conviction to have good goals, goals which ought to be recognized by everybody). See also Kant's use in his *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, which integrates the trias ‚technical–pragmatical–moral', established in his practical philosophy (*AA* VII, 321 ff.). See on Kant's distinction between cultivating, civilizing, and moralizing recently, for instance, O. Höffe, *Kants Kritik der praktischen Vernunft: Eine Philosophie der Freiheit* (München: Beck, 2012), pp. 403 ff. On Kant's philosophy of history, see also W. Flach, 'Zu Kants Kultur- und Geschichtsphilosophie', in R. Hiltscher and A. Georgi (eds.), *Perspektiven der Transzendentalphilosophie im Anschluß an Kant* (Freiburg i. B./ München: Alber, 2002), pp. 105–15 and C. Krijnen, 'Geschichtsphilosophie bei Kant, im Neukantianismus und im gegenwärtigen Kantianismus', in C. Krijnen and M. de Launay (eds.), *Der Begriff der Geschichte im Marburger und südwestdeutschen Neukantianismus* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2013), pp. 29–57.

distinction between conditional and unconditional values is, at least in prin-
ciple, preserved from neo-Kantianism up to the contemporary transcendental
philosophy of Wagner and Flach.[49] Time and again it turns out that humans
are not only determined by (more primitive or more sophisticated) needs of
life—videlicet by the conditionally valid principle of *Lebensdienlichkeit*—but
are capable of taking a distance towards such heteronomous determination
and to reshape this type of determinacy by pure, unconditional, autonomous
values. That is to say that the principles of autonomous spheres of validity (like
truth, morality, beauty, etcetera) *immediately* determine the subject; the sub-
ject acts in an unconditionally rational manner. Third, in the contemporary
Kantian transcendental philosophy of Wagner and Flach in particular, the
realm of civilization and utility is conceived of in a radically different way than
in neo-Kantianism. Utility and civilization turn out not to be purely instru-
mental or extrinsic but obtain the status of an intrinsic value.

(b) Looking at Rickert's *System der Philosophie*, in particular the distinc-
tion between subjective and objective validity of values catches the eye.[50]
A subjective value is either an *individual-subjective* value, that is, valid only for
'this or that subject', or a *general-subjective* value, that is, valid for a numeri-
cal universality of subjects. In both cases, the validity of the value grounds in
their factual recognition or "valuation."[51] General-subjective values charac-
terize the whole of what humans strive for because of their natural interests
of life (Kant: 'happiness', *Glückseligkeit*). Taken for themselves, they establish
merely "subjectivity,"[52] not "categorical," unconditional, intrinsic validity but
'hypothetical', conditioned, extrinsic validity. Values, by contrast, that are valid
independent of the act of recognition by real subjects, are *objective* values.[53]

This distinction between subjective and objective values can be transferred
into another one that not only terminologically gets closer to the logical con-
stellation of different levels of validity; it is also appropriate in characterizing
the meaning of natural *life:* the distinction between 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic'
values. The distinction between 'values of life (*Lebenswerte*)—values of
civilization (*Zivilisationswerte*)—cultural values (*Kulturwerte*)' closely hangs
together with the former, as will become clear.

From the perspective of the *natural sciences*, and hence, as *objects* of direct-
intentional scientific knowledge, for methodical reasons humans appear, that

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49   Cf. Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*, §§ 25 f.; Flach, *Ideenlehre*, pp. 61 ff.
50   Rickert, *System*, pp. 132 ff.
51   Ibid., p. 132.
52   Ibid., p. 133.
53   Ibid., pp. 133 ff.

is to say, are determined, as a value free reality. Taken as *subjects*, however, humans are at the same time the principle of realizing validity (for example, of the knowledge natural scientists have of humans). Human culture is always also produced by humans; it is not just a product of nature. In order to act as an entity determined by values, humans must *live* (in the sense of the natural sciences). Therefore, the problem of realizing values or validity leads to a set of necessary natural conditions that keep the subject alive, and hence, *factually* enable the realization of values. Nature, by implication, is not only a whole of value-free objects; on the contrary, *philosophy* comprehends nature in a *validity-functional* sense, videlicet in its *meaning* for values. Nature transpires to be a *means* for values, a *condition* for realizing values. Correspondingly, Rickert qualifies nature as an *extrinsic value* of culture,[54] and he conceives of this value as a *value of life* or of values of life as the entirety of such values.[55]

Due to their capacity to think (here in the sense of judging, evaluating, considering, deciding, planning, understanding, etcetera), humans are capable of fulfilling their biotic needs to an extent that is superior to all other nature with respect to its effectivity and efficiency as well as to compensate for their natural deficiency in a way that fits life. Yet despite the complexity and differentiations of the human reality, resulting from that capacity, on this level of value determinacy of the subject, *life* (survival, fitness, etcetera) is the factor that *immediately* determines human endeavors. Because of this primary determination by nature, thought, strictly speaking, is not self-determined (autonomous) but determined by something else (heteronomous).

This issue of immediate determination by nature leads to the concept of *civilization* as distinct to culture. Civilization too is characterized by being a *condition for something else.* 'Economy' and 'technology' are those spheres of values of civilization that leap to the eye most. More precisely, Rickert identifies a twofold meaning of the instrumental nature of values of civilization.[56] They are 1) means for preserving *natural* life, and as a consequence they are *indirectly* significant for the ('actual') cultural values; here, they are a means for realizing a means. Nevertheless, they can be brought 2) *directly* into the service of cultural values too. Although, then, values of civilization no longer (directly) concern natural processes, they still have in common with the values of life that they remain *extrinsic*, conditional values.

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54   Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 167 ff.; cf. Rickert, 'Lebenswerte und Kulturwerte', 153 f., 165.

55   H. Rickert, *Die Philosophie des Lebens: Darstellung und Kritik der philosophischen Modeströmungen unserer Zeit*, 2nd edn. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1922), pp. 135 f.; Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 170, 182 f.

56   Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, pp. 168 ff., 182 f.

Extrinsic values are to be distinguished from "culture in the narrow sense": from *intrinsic* values or "autonomous values."[57] The validity of intrinsic values does not depend on being a means for something else; they are not valid 'conditionally' ('hypothetically') but 'unconditionally' ('categorically'). Already when we talk about *planning* our (and others) life within civilization, we implicitly exceed the scope of life. In knowledge, whatever motives we have for striving for it, humans as subjects subject themselves to the immediate determination of the value 'truth'. Hence, as subjects, humans negate the universality of non-epistemic determination (without, of course, eliminating such determination; actually, determination by reality factors and the corresponding values is transformed by intrinsic values). With that, humans subject themselves to a determinacy that is not immediately based on the interests of life but on the interests of humans as subjects: on the subjectivity of subjects.

To summarize, from Rickert's perspective, human reality is constituted by three types of values: 1) *values of life*, 2) *values of civilization*, 3) *intrinsic values.* Values of life and of civilization are, properly speaking, conditional, *extrinsic* values; by themselves, they are only valid 'subjectively', as their validity depends on the value that they serve as a means. By contrast, intrinsic values, taken by themselves, are valid 'objectively'.

Intrinsic values, as already pointed out, because of their foundational function obtain a preferential position, since subjective validity is only determinable as subjective validity by objective validity. Extrinsic values owe their determinacy to their relation to intrinsic values,[58] and hence, presuppose intrinsic values.[59] *As* extrinsic, that is, conditional values they initially obtain "value" by their relation to intrinsic values.[60] To understand the value character of extrinsic values—conditional values *as* values—the concept of that of which the condition is a condition is presupposed. Hence, conditional values are only determinable on the basis of intrinsic values. By dividing or separating and ordering the intrinsic values of culture, the extrinsic values, by implication, are divided or separated and ordered too.

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57   Ibid., pp. 169 ff., cf. 182 f.

58   Rickert consistently claims that the "value of the means" (its validity) depends on the "value of the purpose" (Ibid., p. 169; cf. Rickert, 'Lebenswerte und Kulturwerte', 165; Rickert, *Philosophie des Lebens*, p. 135).

59   We need to know the intrinsic value for whose sake the cultural *means* first obtain "value" (Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, p. 170).

60   Rickert, 'Lebenswerte und Kulturwerte', 154, 162 f., 165; Rickert, *Philosophie des Lebens*, p. 136.

Intrinsic values make up the original determinacy (*Eigenbestimmtheit*) of culture. Culture as culture is fundamentally determined by the concept of intrinsic values and furthermore by the different sets of intrinsic values, specific for a certain sphere of validity. This original determinacy of the determining concept 'culture' is presupposed as the basis of validity of any concrete determination of cultural facts.[61] Culture in the 'narrow sense' therefore functions as a principle of possible, hence, all culture. As Rickert puts it, intrinsic values make up the "general forms of culture";[62] they guarantee the "unconditioned generality of the value of culture" and are in principle uncircumventable as long as "culture *as* culture, that is, as a whole that is 'cultivated' because of its value" is at issue.[63] For this reason, Rickert determines intrinsic values also as 'presuppositions' of the various realms of culture. Only on this basis is it possible to understand concrete, always historically situated shapes and transitions of culture as concretions of the *same* principle.[64]

(c) The sketched theory of conditional and unconditional validity is an essential part of the doctrine of South-West neo-Kantianism. Consequently, it can be found, with this or that accentuation, in Bauch and Cohn too.

Bauch continuously distinguishes sharply between "objective values" and "subjective utility and interests"; and he conceives of this 'subjective' realm as the "whole of conditions for realizing the proper embodiment of values."[65] In accordance with this view, Bauch holds "economic life" to belong to the "lower part" (*Unterbau*) of cultural life in the proper sense: it is merely a "means to an end,"[66] that is, to the end of embodying the values of "spiritual life" (*Geistesleben*).[67] Bauch, therefore, connects economy to the "capriciousness of interests" of individuals.[68] Posed as "proper purpose" (Rickert: intrinsic value), economic life is, as Bauch writes, "without meaning and purpose"; it can only obtain "true" meaning from the realm of objective values.[69] As Bauch puts it, talking up or "absolutizing" economy into an end in itself, does not only deprive economy of its meaning but also reduces "humanity" to "animality."[70] In full accord with Rickert's determination of the relation between intrinsic

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61   Rickert, *Grundprobleme*, §§ 42 ff.

62   Ibid., p. 174.

63   Ibid., p. 175.

64   Ibid., pp. 176 f.

65   Bauch, 'Ethik', p. 262.

66   Ibid., p. 262.

67   Bauch, *Gründzüge der Ethik*, p. 229.

68   Ibid., p. 229.

69   Ibid., p. 230.

70   Ibid., p. 230.

and extrinsic values, for Bauch too economic life itself is related to values only as a means within the relation between means and end, and hence, economy has its "foundation" in "objective values," which are never means but only ends in themselves, leading Bauch to a hierarchy of cultural activity too.[71] And like Rickert, Bauch also conceives of nature as "means for value embodiment"[72] and, by implication, as meaningful (*sinnhaft*).[73] Nature functions as a "medium" for actions directly related by values, a medium of shaping reality according to values, and hence, "value-conditioned" (*sinnbedingt*)[74]—not itself culture but a "pre-cultural stage to culture."[75] "Civilization," for Bauch, is the sphere in which reason is turned into a means for fulfilling mere biotic interests of humans, as is the case for "economic life in its full extension."[76] From this sphere of human endeavors, by life conditioned as it is, Bauch distinguishes the sphere of "human spiritual life," namely "culture."[77] He criticizes the elimination of this distinction harshly.[78] For him, spiritual life regresses as it were into a vassal of mere economic life. Bauch does not hesitate to use evocative language here: he speaks of a "slave service" of reason to the "I-addiction," of human reason at the "service of its animality," etcetera. Although this criticism of civilization is rhetorically charged, as far as the matter at hand is concerned, as in Rickert's elaborations, it comes to light that humans are not mere living beings in the biotic sense but also determinable by reason, and hence, by values. This determinability by values is either only at the service of life (determinacy by nature), or is guided by reason (determinacy by reason). For Bauch, spiritual life proper is guided by cultural values; "intrinsic values," therefore, are not subordinated to "utility" or "means to the end of utility."[79] Instead, just like for Rickert, for Bauch too, life should be shaped according to values.[80] And, as Bauch elaborates, values as values are properly objective values; hence, all our talking about subjective values presupposes objective values.[81]

Cohn conceives of the issue at hand, at least in principle, in the same way. This is why for him the value "pleasant" belongs in an immediate way to the

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71   Bauch, 'Ethik', pp. 262, cf. 269.

72   Bauch, *Gründzüge der Ethik*, pp. 163, cf. 166 f.

73   Cf. esp. Bauch, *Wahrheit*, pp. 512–31.

74   Bauch, *Gründzüge der Ethik*, pp. 271, 279.

75   Ibid., p. 280.

76   Bauch, *Wahrheit*, p. 515.

77   Ibid., p. 515.

78   Ibid., pp. 514 ff.

79   Bauch, *Anfangsgründe*, p. 108.

80   Ibid., pp. 95 ff.

81   Ibid., p. 102.

individual experience (in the sense of *Erlebnis*); it is at the most accompanied by a collective-general validity, that is, a general-subjective validity, and hence, an empirical validity.[82] The same applies to the value of "utility": it belongs to experience not in an immediate way but takes the "remote consequences" into account. Both values come from the same "original life force,"[83] both are "causative follower values" (*kausative Gefolgwerte*).[84] Utility is one of the "selfish values."[85] Economy (as well as technology), then, is guided by the causative value of "utility";[86] regardless of the "intrinsic values" such endeavors are undertaken for in the first place. Correspondingly, Cohn treats economy in his 'Ergetik' (doctrine of realizing values); as for Rickert and Bauch, for Cohn too, the "meaning of causative values" rests in their function for the "realization of intrinsic values."[87] For Cohn too, "civilization" contains the spheres of "technology" and "economy,"[88] thus, it consists of goods that are guided by causative values. As is customary in South-West neo-Kantianism, such values are thought to be "means" and therefore receive their meaning from that for which they function as means. These spheres of civilization, no matter if taken as vital or spiritual, are grounded in "use values."[89] Disconnected from the realms of intrinsic values, for Cohn too, they are in danger of losing sight of intrinsic values, resulting in a loss of "purpose" and "inner fulfillment."[90] More precisely, according to Cohn, "the cultural value of civilization" consists in its serving function: in a free culture (a culture of free persons), technology and economy are wanted because they contribute to the general supply and to put humans out of vital needs that inhibit culture; hence, civilization obtains its "goals," is embedded in a "higher whole," and "useful" by "serving."[91] It does not come as a surprise, then, that Cohn too distinguishes between civilization and "autonomous realms of culture."[92] As for Rickert and Bauch, also for Cohn, spheres of civilization cannot be truly autonomous, as the causative values that guide them depend on the intrinsic value of the good to which they belong.

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82   Cohn, *Wertwissenschaft*, p. 293.
83   Ibid., p. 294.
84   Ibid., §§ 72 with 60.
85   Ibid., § 75.
86   Ibid., § 61.
87   Ibid., § 75.
88   Ibid., §§ 141 ff.
89   Ibid., pp. 551 f.
90   Ibid., p. 556, cf. Ibid., §§ 141, 143.
91   Ibid., p. 562.
92   Ibid., §§ 144 ff.

By contrast, the value that guides the respective autonomous spheres is a valid intrinsic value.[93]

(d) In contemporary transcendental philosophy, a remarkable turn takes place concerning the neo-Kantian demotion of the realm of civilization and utility into an extrinsic (conditional) value: Wagner and Flach give them the status of an *intrinsic value.* Although the relation between extrinsic and intrinsic values is retained, it is significantly modified, most consistently by Flach, into a division within the respective realms of values or ideas. In the course of this, the sphere of the social undergoes a peculiar transformation: the social is separated from practical philosophy and assigned to the independent, intrinsic (unconditional) sphere of the idea of utility—a sphere that was once the paradigm of conditionality, of extrinsic validity. This transformation was analyzed in chapter three, and I shall revisit essential aspects in what follows, relating them to the idea of realizing validity. Of particular significance is the positive connotation utility receives in contemporary transcendental philosophy. In contrast with the philosophical tradition, Wagner and Flach do not conceive of utility as a mere extrinsic value but as an intrinsic value.

For Wagner, the realm that retrains us as concrete subjects is the realm of our *actual existence* (*Realdasein*) in the world.[94] Nature and society play a determining role here. Civilization and technology function as human powers against the power of nature; right and the state as human powers against exuberant pressure of society. They make up specific and independent ideas of reason.

This gives rise to Wagner's reproach of the tradition of philosophy for discussing right primarily in moral terms, whereas for Wagner right should be determined within the context of a more encompassing concept of freedom.[95] The same applies to the value of the state and that of society. Furthermore, the ideas or values of economy, technology, and civilization cannot be reduced to 'mere' utility; Wagner tries to understand them as domains of utility in which the subject forms itself according to an 'unconditional' idea, an idea founded in itself.[96]

Indeed, this transformation essentially hangs together with the idea of realizing validity. Decisive for Wagner's approach of utility is that he conceives of the spheres of economy, technology, and civilization as domains in which the subject steps out of its 'inwardness' (of thought, volition, and feeling) into its

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93   Ibid., pp. 563 f.
94   Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*, p. 300.
95   Ibid., pp. 301 f.
96   Ibid., pp. 302 f.

'outwardness'.[97] Utility, therefore, is not conceived of as a mere means or condition; on the contrary, being a means or a condition itself is conceived of as a condition of realizing subjectivity (in the sense of a whole of intrinsic ideas). It transfers the rather abstract neo-Kantian opposition between unconditional and conditional values into an intrinsic relation. This seems to be as such a legitimate concern, raising the level of determinacy of the idea of realizing validity. This transformation, however, is to a certain extent inherent to neo-Kantianism, as subjective validity is founded on objective validity and culture as a whole also contains the realm of determination by reality factors. In neo-Kantianism, however, the realm of utility is not developed as a moment of self-determination of subjectivity. Instead, the sketched neo-Kantian division of the system in validity and realization of validity as well as that of 'theoretical–practical' thwarts such a functionalization of the realm of utility. At the very least, two different meanings of realization are operative here.

In Wagner, the development of subjectivity from its inwardness into its outwardness leads to the idea of shaping nature and the human world unconditionally (free) and with that to the more basic idea of self-formation of the actual existence of the subject in nature and world.[98] Its components make up the "economic-social idea": right, free society, and the state are the "social" moments of this idea; economy, civilization, and technology the "economic" ones.[99] Apparently, we are dealing here with the realm in which the subject shapes reality according to values, and hence, realizes validity.

The economic-social idea founds and governs a specific relation between the subject and the world. It brings reality under the rule of the idea. Determined by the ideas of truth (thought), the good (volition), and the beautiful (feeling), the subject gets to work governed by the economic-social idea. However, we have already seen that in Wagner's philosophy, eventually, the social was not consistently conceived of as the sphere of realizing values as such. Due to the opposition 'inwardness–outwardness', Wagner's conception of the social failed to strip off its 'instrumental' character. Nevertheless, Wagner's conception clearly shows a tendency to characterize sociality as the realm of actual existence of the subject.

By contrast, Flach presents a determinate concept of the unconditionedness of the idea of utility. For Flach too, the idea of the economic-social is based on "actual life" (*tätigen Leben*) and the interests it pursues.[100] Actual life is

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97   Ibid., pp. 303 f.
98   Ibid., pp. 304 f., 317.
99   Ibid., p. 316.
100   Flach, *Ideenlehre*, p. 137.

characterized by an interest in nature, understood as that which humans need to enable their subsistence, and an interest in the fellow human, as humans live their "monadic-intermonadic" determinacy only together with other humans.

In order to account for the intrinsic status of the idea of the utile, that is, the economic-social idea, Flach must show that the social and economic endeavors of humans are characterized by unconditionedness (autonomy). In this case, the economic-social would not be a mere means to an end, namely a means to realizing culture; instead, the concept of culture itself would contain the idea of utility as one of its fundamental determinations. Accordingly, Flach treats the economic-social interest as a relation between securing one's subsistence and communitization conditionally on the one hand and of securing one's subsistence and communitization unconditionally on the other.

Flach conceives of the relation between this conditionality and absoluteness as of *labor*, that is to say, "preparation of something useful."[101] The determinant of orientation for dealing with labor guided by the idea is the interest of establishing the utility of nature and humans. In the course of mastering nature, communitization becomes more and more essential for humans. As a consequence, Flach is able to comprehend social institutions too as self-formation of labor.[102] The fundamental economic-social values are the validity principles of economizing and communitization as particular accentuations of labor.[103] As fundamental values, they are the defining moments of the idea of the utile. Hence, to use Bauch's own words against him: they are not a tribute 'to humans' animality' but to their determinacy as subjects. Flach's elaborations result in the economic-social fundamental values of economic and social profitability (*Ergiebigkeit*), sustainability (*Nachhaltigkeit*), and favorability (*Einträglichkeit*) of labor. Furthermore, the concept of labor leads to subordinated concepts, like the determination of right, the state, and politics.[104]

From this it becomes clear that validity realms that in neo-Kantianism used to belong to 'practical philosophy' are detached from this group and determined as functions of realization. The economic-social is the sphere of 'actual life'; the idea on which it is based is that of utility. Therefore, utility no longer characterizes a condition for realizing intrinsic values in terms of a conditional value; actually, it takes the embodiment of values as governed by specific principles that characterize the subject in its subjectivity, and hence, that are part of the qualification of culture as the human world. The social, then, turns out

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101   Ibid., pp. 137 f.
102   Ibid., p. 140.
103   Ibid., p. 141.
104   Ibid., pp. 114 f. with 152 and 156.

to be an independent sphere of validity, covering the whole spectrum from conditionality to unconditionedness: this way ends in a communitization that is useful for everybody, to put it differently, in a communitization that is a free, self-determined communitization of the subject. Utility does not characterize a mere realm of conditionality but makes up that moment of the unconditionedness of the subject that regulates 'actual life' as such.

(e) As stated, Wagner's conception of the economic-social suffers from an essential instrumental feature, despite all the proclaimed independency, hence, entraining the burdensome legacy of utility as a mere realm of conditionality. Flach too is dissatisfied with Wagner in this respect. He criticizes the manner in which Wagner relates labor to the realm of actual existence—"as if the other interests . . . do not have anything to do with the actual life of humans!"—and spots an identification of labor with "instrumental action" here; labor would lose its independent validity qualification.[105] However, Flach's determination of the idea of utility can be confronted with the other side of the coin of his Wagner criticism: Flach insists so much on the independence of the economic-social sphere that it becomes opaque, how 'actual life' and the interests pursued in it, the economic-social interests, relate to the 'other human interests' Flach distinguishes in his *Ideenlehre* as the fundamental ones (knowledge, *Sittlichkeit*, aesthetics). Without doubt, knowledge, *Sittlichkeit*, and aesthetics have something to do with actual life. Whereas Wagner grasps their relation in an instrumental way, Flach's conception, in turn, does not offer a determinate insight into it.

Interestingly enough, we can at least divine such a relation if we take Wagner's model into consideration and pay special attention to the position the sphere of *right* has in the entirety of ideas. As mentioned, Wagner is eager to separate right from ethics and to assign the latter to the self-formation of the 'will' and its guiding principles.[106] According to him, the idea of right does indeed take in moral principles but it also takes in other principles and transforms all these principles by subjugating them to its own law of validity.[107] Right enables and secures the objective (outer) freedom the subject needs to perform its intrinsic task of self-formation of its thinking, willing, and feeling.[108] Although, for Wagner, the economic-social values are accompanied by moments that belong to the spheres of the theoretical, ethical, and aesthetical,

105   Ibid., p. 152.

106   Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion*, §§ 26 with 28.

107   Ibid., p. 301.

108   Ibid., p. 307.

they also contain moments that cannot be reduced to these values: "completely autochthone moments," resulting from the independence of the economic-social idea itself and therefore "specific values." This does not seem to mean that right (nonsensically) would be a compound of moral and economic-social values but that the economic-social sphere includes qualities from other spheres, yet, "peculiarly adopted and transformed" by an "independent and leading value moment" of precisely the economic-social.[109] This makes the sphere of right into an independent one, a totum, an entirety.

Flach conceives of this issue, at least in essence, in no other way. In the context of his determination of the moral (*sittlichen*) interest—that is the self-formation of the will—he bounces upon the value of justice and with that upon the problem of right. Yet, for Flach, phenomena of moral culture are not "directly" phenomena of right.[110] Rather, right, the state, and politics belong to the sphere of the economic-social.[111] Astonishingly, Flach also holds that the state does "not only and not primarily" result from the economic-social interest.[112] This, however, would imply that the state, after all, again would be 'primarily' a moral phenomenon, which is fully against Flach's other statements, particularly against his attempt to detach the doctrine of the economic-social from practical philosophy.[113] This imprecision may count as an index for the indeterminacy of the relations between the other intrinsic ideas and the idea of the utile.

The achieved result can be articulated with respect to another aspect too, placing particular emphasis on the concept of *realizing validity.* This concept apparently contains several dimensions, which are occasionally distinguished terminologically as well as concerning the matter at hand. However, Kantian transcendental philosophy (like Kant himself) eventually does not succeed in developing a clear and distinct concept of the realization of validity. More precisely, the validity function of realization can be differentiated as follows:

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109   Ibid., p. 317.

110   Flach, *Ideenlehre*, p. 85.

111   Ibid., pp. 144 f. with 152 and 156.

112   Ibid., p. 144.

113   In accordance with this attempt, Flach even tries to detach Kant's foundation of right from its exclusive dependence on practical philosophy, especially on his doctrine of morals (*Sitten*), and to relate right to Kant's philosophy of culture. See his "Kant zur Gründung von Recht und Rechtswissenschaft" (unpublished, forthcoming in a collection of Flach's essays on Kant, edited by Wolfgang Bock).

- First, the subject is taken into account as an *intentional* factor of validity, and hence, as a merely correlative moment in the fabrics of the laws of validity: the factor that directs itself to values, conducting validity (*intentionale Vollzugsgröße*). Hence, it is the factor that logically individuates or singularizes validity.

- Second, the subject acts as that validity function—the subject at all events is a validity function— that is a *real* entity, a sensory-intelligible unity, a real, *concrete* subject, a person, something not only determined by nature but also determinable by 'freedom', 'ideas' or 'values'; thus, as a human being in the cultural philosophical sense of the word. Even Flach formulates this constellation in a way that the doctrine of the idea as philosophia secunda addresses the interest determinacy of humans,[114] having as a consequence that the philosophia secunda adds the "anthropological accent" to epistemology, which is the philosophia prima.[115] In this dimension of subjectivity, the issue that the subject is related to an 'ought' takes center stage, and for this reason the value determinacy itself too, that is to say, the determinants of orientation that belong to being determined by an ought: the values that guide the subject, producing (theoretical, moral, aesthetical, etcetera) 'culture' by recognizing values.

- Third, the subject in its 'actual existence', 'actual life' functions as the instance of realizing values, as real presupposition of the emergence of cultural goods or to put it in Rickert's terms, as a *social* subject.

Referring to Rickert's distinction between different levels of value or validity, this result can be accentuated to the effect that in addition to the meaning of condition as an extrinsic (conditional) value for realizing values, we can identify a meaning of 'condition' as the realm of realizing validity. The latter realm of realization is connected to any value (conditional values are realized by subjects too). The distinction between intrinsic values and extrinsic values is located on the level of values and their validity, while the distinction between validity of values and realization of values carves out the dimension of realization as a realization by subjects. Likewise, when we take into account, against this background, the distinction between the theoretical and the practical. In this case, practical philosophy contains extrinsic values and the 'ought-determinacy' of the subject as well as the subject as a realization factor of values.

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114   Ibid., p. 14.
115   Ibid., p. 43.

Apparently, the existence of freedom is a complex matter. The fundamental axiotic relation of Kantian transcendental philosophy only insufficiently succeeds in rendering this complexity explicit within a uniform line of thought. The neo-Kantian division of the system into a sphere of the contemplative and the active eventually boiled down to a division into validity and realization. Within contemporary transcendental philosophy, this led to a conception of organizing oneself in actual life according to values that is determined by the idea of the utile and to concentrate ethics on the bonum in the sense of the purity of the will, of setting ends (that which is to be realized). The sphere of the economic-social could be separated via the concept of realizing, shaping or embodying validity in which nature and humans are means, videlicet via the idea or value of utility. The fundamental axiotic relation contains the subject as a logical and as a real factor; it contains objective values that should be realized, as well as objective values that are conditions of realizing such values and that make up a dimension of all values, while at the same time they are supposed to be a value within the system of values that again is thought to be the foundation of culture and its division.

5.2   *Realization as Manifestation of the Idea*

(a) Regarding Hegel's general thought of realizing as determination of the concept into the idea,[116] it is important to emphasize from the start that at the beginning of a speculative sequence of concepts, the concept is a mere 'concrete totality' 'in itself' that needs to be posited 'for itself': the beginning functions as the indeterminate immediate whose content is to be determined. Whereas within the *Logik* this "realization" or determination of the concept into the idea takes place "within the same sphere," and hence, thought determines itself within the element of thought,[117] the philosophies of reality are sciences of the idea in the element of the 'real': the dimension of the reality of the idea is developed. The element of Hegel's philosophy of reality is not the concept but the 'existence' of the concept.[118] Nature and spirit are ways to

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116   Cf. in extension Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 3.4.2 with 4.2.1.2, and recently, including a more profound analysis of the concept of manifestation, C. Krijnen, 'Freiheit als ursprüngliche Einheit der Vernunft: Hegels begriffslogische Lösung eines Kantischen Problems', in W. Neuser and P. Stekeler-Weithofer (ed.), *Natur und Geist* (forthcoming).

117   *II* p. 504.

118   Cf. A. Nuzzo, 'Die Differenz zwischen dialektischer Logik und realphilosophischer Dialektik', in D. Wandschneider (ed.), *Das Problem der Dialektik* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1997), pp. 52–76, at pp. 56 ff. Concerning the relationship between logic and philosophy of reality, see also H. F. Fulda, *G.W.F. Hegel* (München: Beck, 2003), chap. 6 f.

"exhibit" (*darstellen*) the "existence" of the absolute idea.[119] On the one hand, this implies developing the logical concept within the element of reality as the element of its existence. On the other hand, the conceptual structure of reality (nature, spirit) is determined. The determination of reality follows the procedure of the *Logik,* that is to say, the method of comprehending thought. In the case at issue, however, the procedure is not applied to pure determinations of thought but to reality. Therefore, within the philosophy of reality, nature and spirit are comprehended as concretions of the logical. The concept the philosophy of nature begins with is provided by the *Logik,* while the concept the philosophy of spirit begins with is provided by the philosophy of nature. Unlike the *Logik,* which is subject to the provision of plain presupposition-lessness and for this reason has as its initial concept (pure) being, that is, the indeterminate immediate, and hence, taking the beginning as an "absolute" or "abstract" beginning,[120] both philosophies of reality start with a given concept. This concept, then, is 'realized' in a methodically regulated way. Consequently, it becomes apparent how the idea gives itself existence in nature and in spiritual reality: the logical dimension of the concept and the dimension of existence of the concept merge. As a result, the movement of the concept becomes a movement towards as well as a movement of the 'idea', that is to say, of the concept that has reached correspondence with itself in its objectivity. By realizing itself into the idea in the element of the existence of the idea, the concept develops its various 'figures' or 'shapes': the movement of determination and of taking shape go together.[121] The *"determinations"* of the development are both concepts themselves and "in the form of existence"; hence, the resulting sequence of concepts is "at the same time" a sequence of *"figures."*[122]

From a methodological point of view, it is important to stress that Hegel conceives of the idea that gives itself existence in terms of *manifestation.* For Hegel, manifestation as an activity of something which is truly absolute must be thought of as the manifestation of this absolute itself in its expression.[123] Hence, nature and spiritual reality are specific manifestations of the idea. Whereas nature does not show "freedom" (but merely "necessity" and

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119   *II* p. 484.—Unlike the *Logik*, in nature and spirit the concept has an "outer exhibition" (Ibid., pp. 456), whereas in the Logik the progression of the concept is an "immanent deduction" (Ibid., pp. 219).

120   *I* p. 54.

121   Also see *Rph* § 1 N, where Hegel notes that the figure that the concept gives to itself by actualizing itself and the mere concept are essential moments of the idea.

122   Ibid., § 32.

123   Cf. *II* pp. 163 f., 169 f., 190; *Enz* §§ 139, 142 N, 151.

"contingency"),[124] more precisely, the essence of nature is not freedom and thus nature is no manifestation of freedom, by contrast, the formal *"essence"* of spirit is *"freedom."*[125] As regards content, the determinacy of spirit is the *"manifestation"*[126] of its essence (freedom). Manifestation is not a manifestation or revelation of *"something,"* but spirit itself *is* this process of revelation; its "possibility," therefore, is "immediate infinite, absolute *actuality (Wirklichkeit)*.[127] Hegel conceptualizes actualizing freedom as the manifestation of freedom.

(b) The process of manifesting or revealing itself of spirit takes place in three forms, ranging from subjective to objective and finally to absolute spirit.[128] For our discussion of Hegel's concept of the existence of freedom, the following aspects of realizing spirit are significant. As *subjective* spirit, the development of free spirit concerns this spirit itself in a narrow sense. Therewith, the essence of spirit is not only freedom, but because the "concept" of spirit becomes "for it," its being (*Sein*) becomes "with itself, that is, becomes free" (*bei sich, d.i. frei zu sein*).[129] Subsequently, the free spirit objectifies itself into a spiritual world, which it gradually makes adequate to itself: into a world in which freedom 'exists as necessity'. In this form of its activity, the spirit is *"objective"* spirit, that is to say, spirit that brings about a spiritual world, a reality in which spirit actualizes freedom.[130]

The realization of the (absolute) idea within the element of spirit is completed when spirit is *freed* from all forms of existence not adequate to its concept. In this case, spirit 'actually' is free. This freedom is achieved by spirit only through its own activity; the philosophy of spirit, then, addresses the spirit as "producer of its own freedom."[131] Formally, the essence of spirit is freedom and the spirit in the realm of spirit is 'free spirit'.[132]

At the end of the philosophy of *subjective* spirit, Hegel determines free spirit as a unity of theoretical and practical spirit: "free will that is for itself as free will," "will as free intelligence,"[133] spirit that "knows" and "wants" itself as free, that is, spirit that makes its own freedom to its "purpose."[134] *Freedom*

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124   *Enz* § 248.
125   Ibid., § 382.
126   Ibid., § 383.
127   Ibid., § 383. Cf. *II* p. 164.
128   *Enz* §§ 385 f.
129   Ibid., § 385.
130   Ibid., § 385.
131   *TWA* 8, § 382 A.
132   *Enz* §§ 382, 384.
133   Ibid., § 481.
134   Ibid., § 482.

(self-determination) makes up the unity of theoretical and practical spirit. With this, the transition into the objective existence of free spirit is tangible. For the philosophy of *objective* spirit it is decisive to comprehend free spirit in its objective existence, and hence, to determine objective spirit philosophically according to the logic of the concept. Realizing freedom in the objective realm amounts to rendering explicit what is implicit concerning this actualization of the purpose (freedom). The free spirit as result of subjective spirit is in fact "actual"[135] free spirit: free spirit not only has freedom as its "essence"— it has this essence at the same time as its "determination" and its "purpose."[136] Objective spirit is that free will that has made the existence of its freedom to its own purpose.

This is one side of the coin. The other is that the *actualization* of this purpose takes place in an "externally found objectivity," which makes up the "material for the existence of the will."[137] By realizing its concept (freedom) in the "external objective side," the free will is "in it with itself, united (*zusammengeschlossen*) with itself."[138] Hence, the world, the "external objective side," obtains the "form of necessity"; its "substantial relationship" is freedom, while the "appearing relationship" is its "recognition" (*Annerkanntsein*) or "validity in consciousness."[139] The achieved unity (*Zusammenschluß*) of the free ('rational' (*vernünftig*)) and the individual will—the latter is the "element" of "activation" (*Betätigung*) of the free will—constitutes the "actuality of freedom."[140] Because of this individuation or singularization of the actual free will, the "external material" is transformed by freedom: freedom comes into the world, and it does so first as "right," then as "morality," and finally as *"Sittlichkeit."*[141] Right, morality, and *Sittlichkeit* are figures in which the idea manifests itself, thus, forms in which the idea gives itself existence.

Spirit, as the idea that has achieved its being-for-itself and has therefore the concept as its subject and object,[142] is not some abstract general concept of possible spiritual activities or spirits. By contrast, Hegel conceives of spirit as actuality (ἐνέργεια), that is to say, as being in action of freedom, aligned to emerge itself and to come into harmony (correspondence) with itself as

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135   Ibid., §§ 480 ff.
136   Ibid., §§ 482, cf. 483.
137   Ibid., § 483.
138   Ibid., § 484.
139   Ibid., § 484.
140   Ibid., § 485.
141   Cf. Ibid., § 487.
142   Ibid., § 381.

freedom.[143] The task is to establish the conditions under which freedom comes into the world, that is to say, the figures in which the freedom of free spirit realizes itself in the objective realm. Seen from the perspective of the logic of the system, the "concept" in its "actualization" gives itself a "shape" that is a "moment" of the idea as unity of the concept and its realization.[144] Hence, the gradation of the development of the idea goes along with different figures (shapes), which are specific "spheres" of objective spirit.[145]

This, however, does not mean that the figure of (abstract) right and of morality are to any extent "abstract moments" of *Sittlichkeit* in the sense that only *Sittlichkeit* would make up the objective-spiritual reality. Actually, all these three figures concern an existence of the free will; each of them is a moment of its existence. *Sittlichkeit*, however, is an existence which Hegel conceives of as the "unity and truth" of the preceding two figures: of "external world" (abstract right) and "reflected will" (morality). This implies that in *Sittlichkeit* freedom exists both objectively and subjectively. Hence, the will here is a substantial will: a will that has an "actuality" that corresponds to its concepts—in itself (abstract right) and for itself (morality) free will, that is to say, *Sittlichkeit*.[146] Nevertheless, none of these spheres of objective spirit has an 'ontological' prevalence. In any event a particular existence of freedom is at issue. This existence reaches from the most minimal correspondence with its concept up to the maximal correspondence; thus, each of them is a specific figure of meaning. To each of them applies, what applies to spirit as such: to consider the "*concrete* nature" of spirit involves the peculiar difficulty that the different levels of development of the concept of the spirit do not remain as "particular existences" but are "essentially only as moments, conditions, determinations of the higher levels of development"; hence, at a "lower, more abstract determination" one can already "empirically" find the higher determination.[147] All concern a spiritual existence, a spiritual reality. The actual world of humans is

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143   The secondary literature about the philosophy of objective spirit, videlicet Hegel's philosophy of right, does not take sufficiently into account this perspective of the system of philosophy, hence, the formal relationship between a speculative doctrine of the idea and objectifying freedom; instead, it focuses immediately on the content of the respective determinations of objective spirit. A welcome exception is the work of Fulda (see, for example, Fulda, *Hegel*; H. F. Fulda, 'Frei sein—in lebendiger Vernünftigkeit und unter objektiv-rechtlichen Normen', *Internationales Jahrbuch des deutschen Idealismus / International Yearbook of German Idealism* 9 (2011), 265–88).

144   *Rph* § 1 N.

145   Ibid., § 33.

146   Ibid., § 33 with *Enz* § 487.

147   Ibid., § 380.

not only *Sittlichkeit* (mere families do no more exist than a mere formal system of right)—the free will continuously gives itself existence.

(c) In this sense, Hegel conceptualizes the philosophy of objective spirit as 'philosophy of right'. "Right" means here, put generally, existence of the free will.[148] Therefore, right is determined as a qualification of the free will, giving itself existence and in doing so, the free will actualizes its essence (freedom): the existence of freedom. The philosophy of right or of objective spirit has the task of comprehending the existence of freedom.

In conformity with the logic of speculative concept formation,[149] at the beginning of the philosophy of objective spirit a concept of spirit is at issue which is maximally external to the final concept of subjective spirit as free will. This existence of free will is for Hegel *right.* As mentioned, right is not conceived of in a narrow sense but as "encompassing": as "the existence of *all* determinations of freedom."[150] Against the background of Hegel's logic of speculative concept development, it indeed is plausible that Hegel lets the moment of the will, which is one main aspect of free spirit, prevail and makes it to the basic concept of the philosophy of objective spirit (whereas in the philosophy of absolute spirit, thought, which is the other main aspect of free spirit, takes center stage). Hegel does not conceive of the will as something that is separated from thought but as a type of thought—thought that "translates itself into existence, impulse to give itself existence,"[151] thought as a "thinking will."[152] Within free spirit, it is precisely the moment of the will as impulse which makes up the maximal external moment of thought, and hence, of spirit actualizing its freedom.

The development of Hegel's *Enzyklopädie* is designed to deal with thought. It does so in the fashion of self-knowledge of the idea. At the end of the conceptual development of subjective spirit, a free will is constituted; that is to say, the will is *actually* a free will, a free will that is for itself a free will. Therefore, the will is not merely the competence of the subject to determine objects, that is to say, mere intentionality. By contrast, the will is in itself *determined, knows* and *wants* itself, and is in this unity of theoretical and practical spirit at the same time a moment in the *process of self-knowledge* of the idea. As such a

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148   Ibid., § 486.

149   See on the logic of progression of a speculative development, Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 3.4.2, in particular concerning the philosophy of reality: Ibid., chap. 4.2.1.2.

150   *Enz* § 486.

151   *Rph* § 4 A, cf. *Enz* § 233.

152   Ibid., § 469.

moment, free will is the *"existence of reason"*:[153] as a free will, the will aims to give itself existence in an externally found objectivity, that is, to actualize its concept (freedom).[154]

The exposed concept of right concerns a wide concept of right. Right is conceived of as the will, determining itself rationally (*vernünftig*) into the existence of spirit. This process of determination starts with "abstract right."[155] Here, the actual free will achieves its existence in individual persons that put their will in objects external to them.[156] In such a figure, free spirit is maximally external to itself: its subjectivity does not manifest itself in the will itself but in an "*external* matter."[157] The objective-spiritual process of conceptual development that thereby gets underway evolves from this 'immediate' appearance of free spirit (abstract right) to a figure that is 'reflected in itself' (morality) and ends in the figure of "substantial" will as the unity of both two preceding figures, and hence, of objectivity and subjectivity (*Sittlichkeit*).[158] Seen from the perspective of speculative concept development, by starting with abstract right we start to comprehend what realizing freedom in the objective realm is. This perspective of realizing freedom in the objective realm, that is to say, actualizing freedom, makes up the overriding moment; the focus on abstract right (in the sense of "narrow legal right,"[159] that is, positive law and traditional natural law) is functionalized accordingly, and the perspective of actualizing freedom even is a foundation for the traditional abstract concept of right. The figures of existence of free spirit as objective spirit itself as well as their relations are the subject matter of the philosophy of objective spirit.

Hegel's philosophy of right as philosophy of objective spirit deals in the way described with the idea of right. It pretends to show how the concept of right realizes itself in an objectivity adequate to that concept.[160] Accordingly, Hegel conceives of free spirit as "purposive activity,"[161] striving to give its inner (essential) determinacy an objective existence. Under what conceptual

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153   Ibid., § 482.

154   Formulated from the perspective of self-knowledge, the free will is "in itself the [absolute, CK] idea," "only the *concept* of absolute spirit" (Ibid., § 482, cf. § 483).

155   Ibid., § 487.

156   Ibid., §§ 488 ff.

157   Ibid., §§ 488 f.

158   Ibid., § 487.—The sketched end applies to the volitional aspect of free spirit; the development progresses to absolute spirit, addressing the idea that knows itself as spirit.

159   Ibid., § 486.

160   *Rph* § 1.

161   *Enz* § 484.

conditions is this, taking into consideration our level of knowledge of objective-spiritual constellations, possible? For Hegel, the conditions of objective-spiritual realization of freedom neither amount only to a contract theory model of abstract right nor to a moral justification of right from the will of the willing subjects. Actually, it seems necessary to include political communitization. Why is this so?

The existence of freedom starts, as sketched above, with a figure of subjectivity of the free spirit that does not manifest itself in this spirit but in an "*external* matter": that "I" put my "will" into a matter.[162] Conceiving, however, the existence of freedom as freedom of persons that put their will in objects external to themselves (that is the existence of freedom as abstract right) *itself* leads to another figure of freedom: morality. The reason for this is that in the course of the development of the concept of abstract right, it turns out that abstract right eventually can no longer be distinguished from the individual, 'subjective' will, that is to say, from the perspective of morality; the actuality of abstract right requires morality for its own sake, thus, it is "mediated" by morality.[163] In morality, the will, and with that the existence of freedom, is conceptualized as "in itself reflected will," not as freedom of (legal) persons but as the free individual that is "subject" as in itself reflected will.[164] Hegel's moral philosophy discusses the "internal" determinacy of the will, not, as in abstract right, the existence of freedom in external matters.[165] Morality too, eventually, collapses: it turns out to be merely stilted subjectivity, pretending to be absolute; yet, morality posits itself to be identical with the good as a substantial (and not only abstract) generality.[166] Comprehending the existence of freedom, by consequence, involves the transition to a subsequent figure: to the substantial will, that is, the figure of *Sittlichkeit*.[167]

Neither abstract right nor morality is capable of conceptually preserving the existence of freedom. Actually, both have, as Hegel puts it, *Sittlichkeit* as their "carrier and foundation":[168] Abstract right lacks the moment of (particular) subjectivity and morality the moment of objectivity. Hegel's doctrine of *Sittlichkeit* is the "unity of the subjective and objective in and for itself

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162   Ibid., §§ 488 f.

163   Ibid., §§ 502 ff.

164   Ibid., § 503.

165   Ibid., § 503.

166   Morality culminates in an "absolute vanity," a being good that is not objective but "merely certain of itself": exactly because of "taking-the-deepest-inward-turn," the general, objective, good the subject strives for dwindles away (Ibid., §§ 512 with 511).

167   Ibid., §§ 511 ff. with *Rph* §§ 140 f.

168   Ibid., § 141 A.

existing good,"[169] the "unity and truth" of both moments and hence, the idea of the good realized in the "external world."[170] In this manner, the figure of *Sittlichkeit* first makes individual self-fulfillment in the sense of actualizing freedom possible: it is its condition.[171]

Hegel grasps the sphere or figure of *Sittlichkeit* not as in the natural law tradition, that is to say, not as *purposefully established social* entity that enables its members to actualize ends designed from the moral perspective.[172] On the contrary, *Sittlichkeit* proves to be a condition of the possibility to actualize such ends. Indeed, Hegel's main concern is not *Sittlichkeit* as sociality but *Sittlichkeit* as the existence of freedom. *Sittlichkeit* as a figure of the existence of freedom is characterized by the constellation that the "subjective *freedom*" of free spirit gains "immediate and general *actuality*" in attitude and activity, hence, turning "self-consciousness *freedom*" into (a second) "nature," that is to say, the nature of *Sittlichkeit*[173]—without sacrificing the modern, Kantian, concept of the autonomous subject on the altar of the antique, Aristotelian, concept of the polis. In *Sittlichkeit*, self-consciousness freedom has become (a second) nature,[174] the "absolute ought" turned into "being."[175] In accordance with this, Hegel treats the figures of *Sittlichkeit*—the family, the civil society, and the state—in their respective structure of *Sittlichkeit* and meaning: they are addressed as specific moments of the process of self-knowledge of the idea.[176]

6 Conclusion

To what conclusion do the above deliberations lead? That is to say, what results from a confrontation between Kantian transcendental philosophy and

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169 Ibid., § 141 A.

170 Ibid., § 33, cf. *Enz*, §§ 487, 513.

171 'Condition' in the conceptual sense of course, not as preceding temporally (cf. *Rph* § 32 N).

172 As Fulda, *Hegel*, p. 212, points out.

173 *Enz*, § 513.

174 Ibid., § 513.

175 Ibid., § 514.

176 The civil society is a figure of human coexistence in which *Sittlichkeit* is (in first instance) conceptually lost in its own "extremes" (*Rph*, § 184). Yet this does not mean that *Sittlichkeit* has fully disappeared: it must remain at least at a minimal level even in the "system of atomism" (*Enz* § 523, cf. *Rph* §§ 182 ff.), as otherwise the civil society cannot be presented on the "standpoint of bifurcation" (Ibid., § 186), which qualifies civil society as a "spectacle of excess, misery, and the physical and social ruin that belongs to both" (Ibid., § 186).

Hegel's speculative idealism regarding the existence of freedom? The following aspects seem to be particularly significant.

(a) Generally, the place of right in the system of philosophy is conceived of rather heterogeneously. Whereas right in neo-Kantianism belongs to practical philosophy, and practical philosophy could be understood in a second step of interpretation as the dimension of realizing validity, Hegel comes up with a broad concept of right, taking right primarily as the existence of freedom, and hence, as realizing validity. The neo-Kantian and post neo-Kantian concept of right seems to belong to Hegel's concept of abstract or formal right. Wagner and Flach in particular assign this type of right to the idea of the utile; thus, they comprehend it as belonging to the dimension of realizing validity. Accordingly, realizing validity is guided by specific, non-practical principles; in both Wagner's and Flach's conception, realizing validity culminates in an intrinsic, unconditional, and hence, free shape of realization. To a certain extent, we can assess here a convergence with Hegel's concept of right as the existence of freedom in the objective realm.

(b) This convergence is immediately thwarted by an important divergence, leading back again to neo-Kantianism. To both Hegel and Kantian transcendental philosophy applies that the ideal, value-oriented, or spiritual transformation of nature and natural life does not have the standard for its assessment in nature but in the idea, the value, or spirit. Human life is spiritual life, life determined by values or ideas, and hence, not only determined by the instinct of survival but determinable by principles of self-determination too. Because of the latter, it is immediately related to the perspective of freedom. The doctrine of the fundamental axiotic relation as well as Hegel's doctrine of self-knowledge of the idea as spirit are decisive witnesses to that.

In contrast to Hegel, however, Kantian transcendental philosophy has still to achieve this determination by freedom itself systemically within the respective realms of ideas or values: these realms are ordered according to the distinction 'intrinsic–extrinsic' values (neo-Kantianism) or conceptualized in terms of a validity-reflexive process of knowledge of the determining values (*geltungsreflexiver Bildungsgang*) that reaches from conditional to unconditional values (post neo-Kantian transcendental philosophy). Hegel's doctrine of the existence of freedom, however, takes spirit *from the start* as a free spirit in order to discuss its essence (freedom). The capability of spirit to determine itself by the general, by unconditional normativity, is not established in the philosophy of objective spirit but in the philosophy of subjective spirit, namely in that of the practical spirit. Just as the fundamental axiotic relation carves out the relation of the subject to validity from conditional up to unconditional

self-formation, firmly in Wagner and Flach,[177] in his doctrine of practical spirit, Hegel too establishes such a relation of the subject to validity, founding it, however, subjective-spiritually: In 'practical feeling' (of the pleasant and unpleasant) the 'ought' as self-determination is effective in a maximally immediate way; it develops itself via the 'impulses' (to satisfy needs), the 'capacity of choice' (to decide against or in favor of impulses), happiness (as the ideal state of maximal satisfaction of needs to be brought about by choices), into the maximal form of self-determination. As a result, self-determination—and hence 'freedom', which is the essence of spirit—itself becomes the determinacy of the will, that is, the 'content and the purpose' of the will; and hence, the instinctive determinacy of its content has been overcome.[178]

(c) With this, it also becomes apparent that Hegel—differing from the self-formation model of Kantian transcendental philosophy—conceives of realizing validity in the fashion of a *monism of the idea that knows itself.* This is why the distinction between a realm of ideas or values and a realm of realizing ideas or values in active life does not occur. The One idea gives itself existence in the objective realm. The fundamental axiotic relation, therefore, is not specified in terms of conditional and unconditional validity (like in Flach), but the One idea unfolds itself throughout the figures of objective spirit, which make up the "way" (together with the figures of subjective spirit) on which the "reality or existence" of spirit is formed.[179] At the level of objective spirit, a differentiation of unconditionedness (freedom) in an external found objectivity is at issue. This differentiation leads to figures of free spirit as realizing conditions of the existence of freedom. To these figures belongs the figure of morality, meaning the dimension of the will as 'reflected in itself'. Morality, therefore, is not located beyond the dimension of actualizing, for instance in the idea of the bonum or ethics (an idea that, for example, is subsequently addressed by a doctrine of virtues). On the contrary, the standpoint of morality itself and its function for the existence of freedom is determined and positioned systemically (the capacity of the subject to determine itself has already been reached in the philosophy of subjective spirit). In the course of a uniform line of thought concerning the idea that knows itself and develops through logic and the philosophy of nature into the philosophy of spirit, a particular concept of realization results: realizing validity as self-enabling truly subjective

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177   Cf. Wagner, *Philosophie und Reflexion,* §§ 25–28; Flach, *Ideenlehre,* chap. 2 ff.

178   *Enz* §§ 471–480.

179   Ibid., § 553.

endeavors in the objective realm—under what social, that is to say, objective-spiritual conditions is the existence of freedom possible? Hence, the several spheres of the system of philosophy are again conceived of as a function of self-knowledge: they are principles of self-knowledge of the idea and as such they are moments of the process of self-knowledge. As a consequence, the abstractness of the relations between these spheres of ideas and their subforms dwindles: they are rendered explicit by developing them from their original ground of unity, which is the idea as subject–object unity, and hence, comprehending thought that knows itself. Actualizing validity is not conceived of as practical philosophy. It is also not conceived of in the fashion of a distinction between intrinsic values and conditional values; and just as little as idea of the utile, shaping itself from conditional into unconditional communitization and eventually objectifying itself in (abstract) right, the state, etcetera.

These different conceptions of the existence of freedom—development of unconditionedness on the one hand and of conditionality into unconditionedness on the other—allow Hegel to elaborate on those figures of objective spirit that express unconditionedness. Flach's analyses of the utile, by contrast, results in the economic-social fundamental values of economic and social profitability, sustainability, and favorability of labor. With this, a perspective possibly occurs that is not addressed by Hegel. This perspective is related to freedom, but it does not qualify figures of unconditionedness on the level of unconditionedness. In fact, it concerns the dimension of their inner instrumental (teleological) purposefulness. To put it less ambiguously, it concerns the dimension of their inner purposive (appropriate) organization conform the value of utility, and with that of the values of profitability, sustainability, and favorability—the purposeful organization of figures of objective spirit. Therefore, the results of this chapter yield a very complex subsequent social philosophical topic, which, without doubt, is in need of further exploration: the philosophical exposition of the concept of organization.

(d) Instead of pursuing this fascinating issue (it will be dealt with in chapter six), I conclude with a short answer to an obvious question: Why do we need to go the whole way through Kantian transcendental philosophy in order to overcome Kant's architectonic of theoretical and practical reason and to achieve a determined concept realizing validity? Does Hegel's attempt, as presented in his logic and philosophy of sprit, not suffice?

In retrospect, it became initially clear that Kantian transcendental philosophy conceives of the social as the dimension of realizing validity, that is, of shaping reality according to values. Therefore, the social concerns a dimension of all values, regardless of whether these are theoretical values, practical values, or whatever values. This fundamental determination of the social,

which already overcomes the traditional opposition between the theoretical and the practical, expresses a fundamental relation that is foundational for the structure of the system of philosophy: the fundamental axiotic relation. According to this relation, normative constellations are decisive for the whole human world, for all human endeavors and their results (theoretical, practical, etcetera). Hence, the opposition between theoretical and practical reason is ascribed to a more original relation. Therefore, the relation between the theoretical and the practical, as it, then, paradigmatically returns again in the philosophy of Rickert and others, stands in a context of determination other than that of Kant's architectonic of reason: in a context that is oriented towards the unity of theoretical and practical reason.

To this context of determination also applies, from Hegel's point of view, that the fundamental axiotic relation is characterized by a 'logical' and a 'spiritual' dimension.[180] With regard to realizing validity, the spiritual dimension in particular should take center stage. Indeed, it is first in Hegel's philosophy of spirit that we can properly speak of a distance between the value (normative factor) and the subject that is subjected to it as well as of the corresponding implications of what is called the doctrine of the 'primacy of practical reason': here, the constellation of a 'subject' that is subjected to 'values' and as a result produces 'culture' has its genuine meaning. It is significant that at the transition from subjective to objective spirit, Hegel underlines the concept of 'validity':[181] "Right shall be *valid*—α) *I want*, β) *valid*, γ) why valid? Generality—freedom. . . ." Hence, in Hegel's speculative doctrine of the idea, validity is immediately linked to objectivity as the existence of freedom and the norm-guided subject that produces it. As a consequence, it is not primarily conceptualized as subjectivity in the sense of the logical dimension of the fundamental axiotic relation. Validity in terms of subject-relatedness is shown to be a moment of the process of self-development of the idea that belongs to the philosophy of reality.

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180 See Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 5.4, for a comparison between the logical dimension of the fundamental axiotic relationship and Hegel's doctrine of the idea. For a discussion of its spiritual dimension, see C. Krijnen, 'Metaphysik in der Realphilosophie Hegels? Hegels Lehre vom freien Geist und das axiotische Grundverhältnis kantianisierender Transzendentalphilosophie', in M. Gerhard, A. Sell and L. de Vos (eds.), *Metaphysik und Metaphysikkritik in der Klassischen Deutschen Philosophie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2012), pp. 171–210, and C. Krijnen, 'Das Soziale bei Hegel: Eine Konstruktion in Auseinandersetzung mit der kantianisierenden Transzendentalphilosophie', in C. Krijnen and K. W. Zeidler (eds.), *Gegenstandsbestimmung und Selbstgestaltung: Transzendentalphilosophie im Anschluss an Werner Flach* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2011), pp. 189–226.

181 *Rph* § 29 A, cf. 35 A.

By contrast, the effort of Kantian transcendental philosophy to axiotize practical philosophy and its development of a more encompassing concept of freedom that surpasses the opposition between the theoretical and the practical leads to systemic problems. They have been explored regarding the existence of freedom and the equivocal concept of realization it entails. This exploration did not take place in the manner of an external application of Hegelian thoughts but led through the matter itself to Hegel's philosophy of right as a philosophy of spirit and to Hegel's doctrine of the idea, which makes up its foundation. This doctrine not only overcomes the abstractness of Kant's architectonic of reason—it also overcomes its burdensome legacy, which despite the transformation of Kant's architectonic by Kantian transcendental philosophy remains in exactly this philosophy. As a result, a viable concept of actualizing validity comes to light.

This concept also paves the way for addressing the concept of organization. As indicated above, actualizing freedom immediately touches upon the issue of organization. In order to expose the concept of organization philosophically, however, we first need to have a sufficiently determined general concept of organization. This concept makes up the material to be exposed. It will be developed in the next chapter.

The Very Idea of Organization—Phenomenology Revisited

1   'Exposition'

Chapters five and six aim to provide a philosophical exposition of the very idea of organization. What is meant by an 'exposition' here?

In Kant's parlance, an exposition (*Exposition, Erörterung*) is not a definition but an "approximation to a definition";[1] and philosophy as such, unlike mathematics, is certainly not based on definitions.[2] Definitions as "gauged distinctness" (*abgemessene Deutlichkeit*) and a "complete exposition" can be achieved at best at the end of a philosophical investigation.[3] For Kant, philosophical explanations of a concept are only possible as expositions of given concepts;[4] as such, they are not definitions but *Erörterungen* (considerations).[5] Kant determines an *Erörterung* as a "successive representation" of the features of a concept, as far as they can be found by "analysis."[6] The exposition (*Erörterung*) provides the "distinct" representation of "what belongs to a concept."[7] If this explanation grasps the concept as a "principle," and hence, makes plausible how "other synthetic knowledge a priori" relates to it, it is called transcendental.[8]

Fichte and Hegel present a more specific concept of exposition: For Fichte, the exposition makes up the scientific *Erörterung* of a concept by determining "its place within the system of the human sciences," meaning that it shows, "what concept determines its place and what other concepts are determined by it."[9] The point is to expose, in a justified way, the place of a concept within the system. The same applies to Hegel. Like Kant, Hegel distinguishes an exposition from a definition; his interest concerns the determined concept as a

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1   *Logik* § 105, cf. *KrV* B 758.
2   *KrV* B 754 ff.
3   *KrV* B 758 f.
4   *KrV* B 758.
5   *Logik* § 105, cf. *KrV* B 41.
6   *Logik* § 105.
7   *KrV* B 38.
8   *KrV* B 41.
9   J. G. Fichte, 'Über den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre (1794/98)', in I. H. Fichte (ed.), *Sämmtliche Werke*, 11 vols. (Berlin: Veit, 1845–1846 (Nachdr. 1971)), I, 55.

result of an internal process of determination (versus the concept as an external given), and hence, the place the concept has in the system of concepts. Just as in Hegel's philosophy of nature (but differing from the *Logik*), the philosophy of spirit begins with the exposition of the concept of its object (this concept itself is the result of the preceding philosophical discipline, and hence, not a 'mere' given). This 'exposed' concept is subsequently 'realized' into the idea as the unity of the concept and the object, thus ensuring that the concept is not empty.

To summarize, the intended exposition of the concept of organization does not aim to produce a full-blown philosophy of organization, which would require the realization of the concept of organization. It indeed exposes the concept of organization. This exposition supplies a well-determined *beginning* of a philosophy of organization within the system of philosophy: it reveals the place of the concept of organization, and with that its initial determinacy.

The actual possibility to address the concept of organization has resulted from investigations into social ontology in Kantian transcendental philosophy and in Hegel, that is to say, from the previous chapters. More precisely, at the end of chapter four on realizing validity, the issue of organization appeared as a subsequent philosophical theme. After all, it was shown that realizing validity was conceptualized differently: as a development of unconditionedness and of conditionality into unconditionedness. Whereas Hegel elaborates on those figures of objective spirit that express unconditionedness, Flach, in contrast, as an exponent of contemporary Kantian transcendental philosophy, advances the conceptual development from conditionality to unconditionedness. It has turned out that from a system theoretical perspective, the former model is more advantageous.[10] Yet in his analyses of the utile, Flach works out the economic-social fundamental values of economic and social profitability, sustainability, and favorability. With this, a point of view occurs that Hegel does not address, a point of view that is related to actualizing freedom, though

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10   Note that this advantage has been derived from the idea that philosophy is committed to the problem of self-knowledge of thought (see chap. 4.3). Another question, of course, is if Hegel's speculative conception of the concept and the principle of negation intrinsically related to it is in all respects to be preferred to the more correlative approach of Kantian transcendental philosophy. Indeed, Rickert famously and influentially (for Kantian transcendental philosophy) initiated a debate on 'negation and otherness', reproaching Hegel. Much could be said about this, however, not within the scope of the present study. See for a discussion especially W. Flach, *Negation und Andersheit: Ein Beitrag zur Problematik der Letztimplikation* (München, Basel: Schwabe, 1959), and C. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System: Prinzipientheoretische Untersuchungen zum Systemgedanken bei Hegel, im Neukantianismus und in der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008), chaps. 1–3.

the values mentioned do not qualify figures of unconditionedness on the level of unconditionedness. Instead, they qualify the dimension of the inner instrumental (teleological) purposefulness of such figures. To be more precise, they qualify the dimension of their inner purposive (appropriate) organization according to the value of utility, and with that of the values of profitability, sustainability, and favorability—the purposeful organization of figures of objective spirit. As suggested, this yields a very complex subsequent social philosophical topic, in urgent need of further exploration: the philosophical exposition of the concept of organization, hence, of a basic concept of the social sciences. This shall be examined in this and in the following chapter.

This chapter is concerned with revisiting phenomenology. What is at issue here? In chapter one, thus at the beginning of the series of investigations into social ontology in general and organization in particular, a phenomenology was necessary in order scientifically to establish organization as a legitimate issue for philosophical explorations.[11] In discussion with what Kant calls the 'fruitful *bathos* of experience', that is to say, with determinations of organization supplied by organization studies including its meta-theoretical debate, a desideratum has been achieved. It was shown that determinations of organizations resulting from a direct relation to its object (*intentio prima et recta*) always presuppose the original determinacy and validity of 'organization', and hence, of a more original concept of organization in need of philosophical exploration. This exploration was forced to go beyond the present meta-theoretical debate on organization too. Therefore, at most 'organization' has been established as a genuine philosophical *problem.*

This, however, does not suffice for an exposition of the concept of organization. An exposition requires considerably more material determinations of organization or 'features of the concept', which need to be ordered

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11   This function of a phenomenology stems from Hegel's *Phänomenologie* too insofar as this work is an introduction into thought as the speculative subject matter of philosophy (*Logik*). It is also guiding for, among other philosophers, Husserl, who correspondingly distinguishes between a 'phenomenological' reduction and an 'eidetic' one. Also Windelband or Wagner, for instance, offer a phenomenology in the sketched sense. Cf. on this: C. Krijnen, *Nachmetaphysischer Sinn: Eine problemgeschichtliche und systematische Studie zu den Prinzipien der Wertphilosophie Heinrich Rickerts* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), chap. 7.3.1 with p. 303 note 10; Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, pp. 59–62 incl. note 13 and pp. 67 ff.; for Hegel, cf. recently R. Aschenberg, 'Das Rechts des Bewusstseins: Eine These der Phänomenologie des Geistes und ihre System- und Kritik-Funktion', in M. Gerten (ed.), *Hegel und die Phänomenologie des Geistes: Neue Perspektiven und Interpretationsansätze* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2012), pp. 83–105; for Husserl cf. R. Bernet, I. Kern and E. Marbach, *Edmund Husserl: Darstellung seines Denkens*, 2. verb. Aufl. (Hamburg: Meiner, 1996), chap. 2.

'successively' in a justified way. These material determinations also have to be delivered phenomenologically,[12] which is the concern of chapter five: 'The Very Idea of Organization—Phenomenology Revisited'. Revisiting phenomenology focuses on *the diversity and the unity in organization theory.* It addresses the history of organization and organization theory. As a result, based on the current state of affairs in relation to organization theory, a general concept of organization with a maximal extension is established. This concept of organization makes up the material to be determined speculatively within the framework of an exposition—the concern of chapter six: 'The Very Idea of Organization— A Hegelian Account'.

2   Unity and Diversity in Organization Theory

2.1   *Organization*

The phenomenon of *organization* is one of the most striking in modern society. Not without reason is modern society qualified as an "organizational society."[13] Modern societies are characterized, among other things, by the fact that a plurality of organizations are active in them, fulfilling various tasks, that is to say, in modern society people are embedded in a social environment that is dominated by organizations.[14] Without doubt, organizations can be found in the cultures of ancient China, Egypt, Greek, Rome, or India. In these places, however, organizations were equivalent to those in modern culture neither in terms of their quantity nor their ubiquity. Modern organizations reach from education and research to medical care, industry and service, security and politics up to governmental institutions. They are by no means

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12   Whereas Hegel's *Phänomenologie*, by contrast, is from the start developed from material determinations, and the *Enzyklopädie* continuously integrates the historically available meanings of a concept.

13   R. Presthus, *The Organizational Society: An Analysis and a Theory* (New York: Random House, 1962).

14   See on this and what follows: H. van Diest, *Een doordachte organisatie* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2010), pp. 12 f., 211; M. de Geus, *Organisatietheorie in de politieke filosofie* (Delft: Eburon, 1989), p. 1; E. Gross and A. Etzioni, *Organizations in Society* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985), p. 1; M. Reed, 'Organizational Theorizing: A Historically Contested Terrain', in S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T. Lawrence and W. R. Nord (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Organization Studies* (London: SAGE, 2006), pp. 19–54, at pp. 19 ff.; W. R. Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems*, 5th edn. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003), pp. 3 f.; A. Strati, *Theory and Method in Organization Studies: Paradigms and Choices* (London, Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2000), pp. 2 ff.

restricted to the army and public administration. Whoever wants to realize purposes that transcend the possibility of the individual is in modern, highly differentiated societies dependent on organizations.[15] All areas of society are permeated by organizations.

Organizations in this sense emerged particularly in the nineteenth century, specifically in the course of the economic growth that accompanied the industrial revolution. Contractual relationships, based on the will of the participants to realize shared goals, took the place of familial relations and friendship. Functions once conducted in smaller organizational units—for instance in the οἶκος, the ancient Greek house community, which was an economic community too, consisting of family, servants, and slaves—[16] became subjected to a process of social differentiation. This process transformed them into specific realms, characterized by a specific normativity and specific organizations, not least into huge, complex economic, political entities, which are generally social entities conducting some kind of collective activity.

2.2   *Organization Theory*

With the emergence of modern organizations in the nineteenth century, *organization theory* emerges. It was apparently fed by older sources. In order to gain a pertinent phenomenological concept of organization, it is first important to distinguish the *prehistory* of organization theory from organization theory as a scientific determination (explanation, interpretation, etcetera) of organization, that is, from a methodically justified determination of the subject matter of organization theory.

Academic literature does indeed distinguish the proper history of organization theory from its prehistory. The prehistory is thought to contain sources of inspiration for organization theory. Differing from organization theory, the prehistoric sources are supposed not to conceive of organization from One perspective or to establish organization as a specific field of research, and hence, organization theory as a discipline of research in its own right. In fact, the respective theorists belong to their own disciplines, but they delivered

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15   Cf. also T. Parsons, *Structure and Process in Modern Societies* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960), p. 41.

16   See the influential view of Aristoteles, *Politik*, 4th edn. (München: DTV, 1981), 1280 b 33. See on Aristotle's view in contrast to modern conceptions of economics: M. Faber and R. Manstetten, *Was ist Wirtschaft? Von der politischen Ökonomie zur ökologischen Ökonomie* (Freiburg i. B., München: Alber, 2007); T. Petersen, *Individuelle Freiheit und allgemeiner Wille: Buchanans politische Ökonomie und die politische Philosophie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996).

fundamental concepts and ideas that turned out to be reference points for the later development of organization theory.[17] Until the late forties of the twentieth century, research was concerned only fragmentarily with topics relevant for organization, without aiming at a generalization of the topic under study, regardless of whether in regard to sociology, political science, economics, or psychology. When there were efforts to come to general principles at all,[18] their methodology was more normative than descriptive: how organizations should function instead of how they actually function.

Around the middle of the last century, within sociology generalizations concerning the structure and the functioning of organizations as organizations were developed and tested empirically. At the same time, interdisciplinary approaches entered the scene in which political scientists, economists, engineers, and psychologists collaborated to deal scientifically with organization.[19] Because of these efforts, organization received such a level of definitional determinacy that similarities in form and function could be identified. Likewise, the theme of organization gained a level of complexity that turned out to be stimulating for further empirical investigations. At the end of the fifties, the first handbooks appeared,[20] and a respective journal was founded: the *Administrative Science Quarterly.*

Although the literature supplies us with a rather heterogeneous picture of the immediate predecessors of organization theory, thinkers like Taylor,[21] Fayol,[22] Weber,[23] Barnard,[24] Follet,[25] or Mayo[26] certainly count as founding figures. In addition to these *immediate* predecessors, we can observe a (much)

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17   Cf. M. J. Hatch and A. L. Cunliffe, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 6 f.

18   Cf. F. W. Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (New York: Harper, 1911); H. Fayol, *General and Industrial Management*, (transl., original 1917) (London: Pitman, 1949).

19   Scott, *Organizations*, pp. 9 ff.

20   J. G. March and H. A. Simon, *Organizations* (New York [etc.]: John Wiley & Sons [etc.], 1958); A. Etzioni, *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations* (New York: Free Press, 1961); P. M. Blau and W. R. Scott, *Formal Organizations* (San Francisco: Chandler Pub. Co., 1962).

21   Taylor, *Principles of Management.*

22   Fayol, *Management.*

23   M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1922); M. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1924).

24   C. I. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938).

25   M. P. Follett, *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett* (New York: Harper, 1941).

26   E. Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (Boston: Harvard University, 1945).

older history, to which the academic literature also points out and occasionally even becomes the subject matter of a particular study. In this older history, the role played by philosophers is by no means unimportant. Whereas some[27] refer to Smith[28] and, from the post-Hegelian epoch, Marx[29], or[30] add to this list Machiavelli[31] and Saint-Simon,[32] others cast their net wider. They offer a chronology that starts with the delegation of 'authority' by Moses from the Old Testament (1491 BC) arrive via the war-book of Sun Tzu (500 BC), in which 'hierarchy', 'communication', and 'staff planning' are addressed, Socrates' (400 BC) thought on the universality of 'management', Xenophon's (370 BC) considerations about the 'division of labor', medieval philosophers, Machiavelli, Smith, and Robert Owen at Hegel's time and, eventually, at the present age.[33]

It is therefore of no surprise that occasionally the history of philosophy, or more precisely, of *political* philosophy, is sounded out for insights that could contribute to making the phenomenon of organization more transparent.[34] Although 'state organization' concerns a specific type of organization, many themes relevant for organization as such play a role here: among others, 'leadership', 'obedience', 'power', 'justice', and 'self-determination'. And organizations are always an artificially created order of jointly acting persons in order to realize certain ends. To give attention to the history of political philosophy, however, requires a strong reconstructive approach, as in that history organization is not a topic on its own: at most it is addressed implicitly. This implicit content needs to be made explicit. Most of the philosophers before Hegel do not even use the word 'organization' but apply other terminology; therefore, the historian interested in the *problem* of organization, and hence, in organization as a subject matter, is forced to find the relevant 'synonyms' or 'functional equivalents' for what nowadays is called organization.[35]

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27   Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, p. 6.

28   A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Dublin: Whitestone, 1776).

29   K. Marx, *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Oekonomie* (Hamburg, New-York: O. Meissner; L. W. Schmidt, 1867).

30   Scott, *Organizations*, p. 10.

31   N. Machiavelli, *Il Principe / Der Fürst* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995).

32   See, for instance, the journal *L'organisateur*, which since 1819 Saint-Simon edited together with Thierry. See also H. Saint-Simon, *Du système industriel* (Paris: Renouard, 1821–22).

33   J. M. Shafritz, J. S. Ott and Y. S. Jang, *Classics of Organization Theory*, 6th edn. (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2005), pp. 9 ff.

34   Geus, *Organisatietheorie*.

35   Such could be 'building', 'constructing', 'creating', 'generating', 'ordering', 'association', 'society', 'community', 'body', and others. De Geus, Ibid., p. 6, is indeed aware of the

2.3   *History of the Concept of Organization*

We have seen that organization in the sense of organization theory is not specifically thematic in the history of philosophy before Hegel, or more generally, in history as such; in fact, it is mainly co-addressed in other contexts. The same result arises from the perspective of the history of the concept (*Begriffsgeschichte*) of organization, and of concepts closely related to it, like organ, organism, and political body.[36] These concepts originally do not stem from the language of the political-social realm but from the description of nature and of the natural science. Only by its 'inauthentic' use as a metaphor and an analogy was 'organization' introduced into the political-social realm. The term 'organization', a neo-Latin word formation (*organisatio*), first occurs in political-social contexts not before the beginning of the eighteenth century (and within medical-technical contexts in the fourteenth century). During the period of the French Revolution, the concepts 'organization' and 'organizing' were established.[37] In the age of German idealism, the concept of organization captures the state and other organizational forms of political power.[38]

From the perspective of a history of concepts, 'organization' initially has a *constitutional* as well as a *political* imprint. The concept was meant to recognize the new form of political order. Thereby it becomes clear that the state is determined by a *purpose* (end, goal, aim). As society is conceived of as an association for realizing certain purposes, the state too is thought to be an entity 'consciously' and 'volitionally' created to realize purposes and arranged in a way that suits these purposes. In particular its initial revolutionary impetus of the new political order gives 'organization' a dynamic sense: the concept of organization means goal-oriented creation, arranging cleverly a required endeavor. In the course of the history of the concept of organization, the constitutional and political context is expanded to administrative bodies, the army, political authorities and institutions, and eventually to all kinds of human collectivities. Apparently, with 'organization', a subject matter has found its concept—an active, methodical shaping of the political-social order. More precisely, the

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"methodological problem" of his approach. See for the problem of terminology and the mentioned functional equivalents: Ibid., pp. 6, 17, 29, 54, 66, 79.

36   See for what follows, G. Dohrn-van Rossum and E.-W. Böckenförde, 'Organ, Organismus, Organisation, politischer Körper', in O. Brunner, W. Conze and R. Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, 9 vols. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972 ff.), IV, pp. 519–622.

37   Ibid., pp. 566 ff.

38   Ibid., pp. 561 ff.

concept of organization refers to, as it is put within the context of legal documents, the "inner arrangement, powers, and order of the course of business," the "arrangement of the inner configuration, the procedural rules."[39]

To the days of German idealism, the concept of organization remains primarily connected to the context of right and state. Hegel, accordingly, uses the concept of organization within his philosophy of spirit as a qualification of the state.[40] The concept of organism, however, is not only used as a guiding concept for theories of the state and constitutional constellations. Actually, it goes beyond this 'narrow' scope and covers a broad field of application: it becomes "depoliticized," that is, "generalized and transferred to any social figuration, relationship, organization" that exhibits an inner arrangement, as typical of organisms.[41] Likewise, the concept of organization is initially a technical concept used in constitutional contexts, particularly relating to (public) administration, the army, the state as a whole, meaning their "arrangement, composition and division, allocation of responsibilities, order of the course of business."[42] The concept of organization, then, broadens its scope of application and becomes established as a guiding concept for discussions about a conscious change of the society and its order. It concerns a discussion that not least emerges from the social antagonism that went along with the working population of the nineteenth century.

The concept of organization, like the concept of organism, is *extended.* It refers to the "connection of many, pursuing common purposes," entities, capable of goal-setting and goal-realizing by actions.[43] Hence, the restriction to arrangements and business processes in the realm of the state and politics is disclosed. The concept of organization is transformed into a technical term of the emerging business studies and of sociology, and finally even into a "fundamental concept of interpersonal activity."[44]

As a result, the above explorations into the history of the meaning of the concept of organization lead to at least two different insights, which are significant for comprehending organization speculatively, in first instance and, of course, significant for the exposition of organization as a phenomenon of spirit. First, a *general* concept of organization with a *maximal extension* comes

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39   Ibid., pp. 575 ff.

40   Cf. chap. 6.1.6.

41   Dohrn-van Rossum and Böckenförde, *Organ, Organismus, Organisation*, p. 608.

42   Ibid., pp. 611 f.

43   Ibid., p. 613.

44   Ibid., p. 621.

to light. Second, *perspectives* or paradigms of organizational research come into focus; organization theory conceptually determines the general concept of organization within such perspectives. Both insights will be addressed in what follows.

2.4   *General Concept of Organization*

On the one hand, it is continuously emphasized that organizational research can only be achieved within the framework of fundamental points of view, regardless of whether they are called 'definitions', 'perspectives', 'paradigms', 'views' or 'concepts' of organization, etcetera.[45] Such fundamental points of view first constitute the field of organizational research and, subsequently, instruct organizational research methodologically. As concepts of the framework of organization, they are supposed to be neither verifiable empirically within a certain paradigm nor can they be fully reconciled by scientific research, as this research itself is based on fundamental assumptions about the subject matter of organizational research and our knowledge of it, and hence, research within a paradigm too. Such framework concepts are held not so much to refute or replace as to supplement each other.

Therefore, it is all the more surprising that, on the other hand, within organization theory we can observe a dominating *overarching* concept of organization. This concept seems both regarding its form and matter not to relate to a paradigm. Hence, we are facing a dominant paradigm-unladen concept of organization. Moreover, this dominant paradigm-unladen concept does not conceive of organization merely as a specific, restricted phenomenon, for example of the modern economy, but as a human phenomenon *sui generis.*

Scott, for instance, offers right from the start in the opening chapter of his book, which deals with the ubiquity of the phenomenon of organization in

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45   Cf., e.g. Scott, *Organizations*, pp. 17, 25 ff., 30 ff., 103, 121; Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, pp. 10 ff.; Geus, *Organisatietheorie*, pp. 5 ff.; Strati, *Theory and Method*, pp. xi ff.; Diest, *Doordachte organsatie*, pp. 19 ff., 23 ff., 209 ff.; M. Reed, 'Reflections on the 'Realist Turn' in Organization and Management Studies', *Journal of Management Studies* 42 (2005), 1621–44 The idea of a paradigm, as current in contemporary debates in the philosophy of science, is inspired by T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edn. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962). The authors mentioned rather loosely pick up Kuhn's idea of paradigm. Especially regarding the 'meta-theoretical' discussions about paradigms within organizational research, G. Burrell and G. Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life* (London: Gower, 1979), turned out to be important, as well as the popular application of this work in G. Morgan, *Images of Organization*, Updated ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2006).

modern society, a general determination of organization: "to achieve goals beyond the reach of the individual."[46] Subsequently, "common features" are recognized, the first of which, on the basis of the organization literature ("most analysts"), can be described as follows: "social structures created by individuals to support the collaborative pursuit of specific goals."[47] This determination is so general that Scott narrows it down to the context of the definition that has dominated organization theoretically and practically for a very long time: the "rational system definition" of organization. The early definitions of organization characterize organization as a human collectivity having the determinacy of pursuing relatively *specific* (*explicit*) *goals* and exhibiting a relatively *high level of formalized social structure.*[48] Subsequent to this definition of organization, the 'natural system definition' can render the explicitness of goals and the relevance of the 'formal' organization problematic.

De Geus, like others too, points to the etymology of organization: the Greek 'organon' and the Latin 'organum'. Organization means *tool, instrument.* By emphasizing the etymology of organization, it becomes apparent that organization has to do with arranging or ordering parts into a whole in a way that by operating together something is achieved.[49] The etymological reference also leads to a broad, 'instrumental' view of organization. As Strati would put it, organization is viewed as a "human artefact designed to achieve one or more objectives."[50] It is within this encompassing determination of organization

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46 Scott, *Organizations*, p. 3.

47 Ibid., p. 11.

48 Ibid., pp. 26 f.—See, for instance, Barnard, *Functions*, p. 4: "formal organization is that kind of cooperation among men that is conscious, deliberate purposeful," or A. Etzioni, *Modern Organization* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 4: "organizations are social units (or human groupings) deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals." Seen from the perspective of structures, social entities that are not characterized by a relatively high level of goal specificity and formalization are not organizations. According to the rational system definition, for instance, families or social movements, strictly speaking, are not organizations: social movements tend to have a high goal specificity and a low formalization, whereas families are rather highly formalized but score low on goal specificity (compare Scott, *Organizations*, p. 27). Nevertheless, organizational aspects do play a role in these social entities ('relatively low, relatively high').

49 Geus, *Organisatietheorie*, p. 1.

50 Strati, *Theory and Method*, p. 1. See also Geus, *Organisatietheorie*, p. 2, who holds that the view that organizations are an "artificially created order of joint action to achieve certain purposes" is "widest" spread, of "the utmost importance," and immediately linked to the view dominant in the literature on organization. De Geus (Ibid., pp. 1 f.) also addresses the meaning of organization in ordinary language. He distinguishes a) the organization

that De Geus distinguishes various fundamental concepts of organization (rational, integrating, libertarian).[51]

Van Diest too acknowledges a general meaning of organization, underlying the three concepts of organization that he distinguishes, that is, underlying the concept of organization as machines, as organisms, and as cultural communities. Regardless of whether in Etzioni,[52] Drucker,[53] Shafritz, Ott, and Jang,[54] Touraine,[55] Keuning and Eppink,[56] and others—organization is always characterized by the following features: it consists of *humans, cooperating* in order to achieve a *purpose* or several purposes. The same applies to Van Diest.[57] Right from the start, he conceives of organizations as something "accomplished" by humans, "with the intent to realize certain purposes in a regulated way";[58] organizations concern a "structured way of cooperation."[59] Such entities, for Van Diest, are a "flywheel of realizing concrete freedom."[60] Subsequent to this general determination of organization, he addresses "basic concepts" of organization, which are, in a particular respect, relevant for any organization.[61]

Such a general determination of organization can also be found in the work of Shafritz, Ott, and Jang, preceding the various concepts of organization they distinguish. Meyer states as early as in his preface that "organization . . . is after all an attempt to simultaneously rationally bring under control activity, people, and linkages to wider environment."[62] Although Shafritz, Ott, and Jang arrange their book according to nine "major perspectives of 'schools' of organization

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of a celebration (that is, organization as a form of action), b) the organization of legal assistance (that is, organization as the order of a particular field), and c) the organization of a party (that is, organization as an artificially created order of action for achieving certain purposes).

51   Organization here is always conceived of as broader than only concerning the 'state': it encompasses the state as well as other forms of human coexistence.

52   Etzioni, *Modern Organization*, p. 3.

53   P. F. Drucker, *Post-Capitalist Society* (New York, NY: Harper, 1993), p. 48.

54   Shafritz, Ott and Jang, *Organization Theory.*

55   A. Touraine, *Sociologie de l'action* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1965), p. 181.

56   D. Keuning and D. Eppink, *Management en organisatie: Theorie en toepassing*, 3rd edn. (Leiden: Stenfert Kroese, 1985), pp. 4 f.

57   Diest, *Doordachte organsatie*, p. 211.

58   Ibid., p. 12.

59   Ibid., p. 213.

60   Ibid., p. 214.

61   Ibid., pp. 215 ff.

62   Shafritz, Ott and Jang, *Organization Theory*, p. x.

theory,"[63] in the opening sentence of their book the authors express their uniform understanding of organization: "By *organization* we mean a social unit with some particular purposes."[64] For them, what is called the 'scientific management movement' only makes up the beginning of a continuing search "for the most effective means by which people can be organized into social units in order to achieve the goal of their companies, governments, or themselves."[65]

Therefore, the classical definition of Barnard encapsulates the general and fundamental determination of organization in the formal sense quite perfectly: "Formal organization is that kind of cooperation among men that is conscious, deliberate purposeful";[66] it is "a system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons."[67]

2.5   *Perspectives on Organization*

This general determination of organization, dominant in organization studies, makes up the foundation for distinguishing different *perspectives* (paradigms, etcetera). Each of them casts a particular light on the phenomenon of organization. They address this or that aspect of organization.

Several levels of fundamental perspectives should be distinguished. They reach from organization theory to philosophy, or, more precisely, to the philosophy of organization and general ontology. For this reason, we cannot only detect *schools* of organization theory, that is to say, formations that investigate in a relatively similar way the presupposed subject matter organization. We can also detect *perspectives* ('definitions', 'paradigms', 'views', 'concepts of organization', etcetera), that is to say, formations that first constitute organization as a subject matter as well as its research. Moreover, in addition to these foundational concepts, *ontological considerations of a more general kind* are conducted, concerning again the foundations of the perspectives of organizational research. The question here is, whether organization is to be conceived of in terms of an 'objective', 'substantial' ontology, and hence, as a stable, static entity with enduring properties and tendencies, or in terms of a 'subjective', 'processual' ontology, and hence, as an entity that is continually

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63   Classical Organization Theory; Neoclassical Organization Theory; Human Resource Theory; 'Modern' Structural Organization Theory; Organizational Economics Theory; Organizational Culture Theory; Reform Through Changes in Organizational Culture; Theories of Organizations and Environments (Ibid., pp. v ff., xii).

64   Ibid., p. 1.

65   Ibid., p. 1.

66   Barnard, *Functions*, p. 4.

67   Ibid., pp. 73, 81; cf. also 72, 94 f.

(re)constructed by the participants. Is it to be regarded as an objective and structured entity or as a temporarily stabilized cluster loosely held together by relational networks of meaning? Or should it even be stated in a way other than in terms of this opposition, for example in terms of a stratified ontology, typical of critical realism and its effort to overcome the mentioned positivist and social-constructivist determinations of organization?[68]

However, for an *idealist* exposition of the concept of organization, the level of philosophical competitors (process ontology, ontology of substances, positivism, social-constructivism, critical realism) is much less relevant materially than the level of the various 'perspectives' of research into organization. The reason for this is that the perspectives contain the basic determinations of the matter of organization theory (and not purportedly 'philosophical' determinations of this matter).[69] The perspectives of organizational research supply us with aspects that are superordinate, and yet, immediately materially related to organization. These material aspects, as far as they are relevant, need to be translated into the intended philosophical concept of organization. A philosophy of organization has to determine scientifically the concept of organization, which is presupposed as the starting point and aim of knowledge of organization theories. It concerns the most fundamental concept of the subject matter of any organization theory.

Not without reason is the determination of this concept addressed in numerous studies on the foundations of organizational research. For methodical reasons, the concept of organization is and remains presupposed by any non-philosophical theory of organization. The reason for this is that the concept of organization makes up the framework within which organization theory conducts its determinations as determinations of 'organization'. It is, therefore, presupposed as the original determining concept of any organization theory. Hence, the basic question to pose is: What is an organization? The answer requires an idealist approach beyond positivism, social-constructionism, and critical realism. Without doubt, existing attempts by the social sciences and philosophy to determine organization and its foundations conceptually are important *material.* The meaning and significance of this material itself, however, is to be determined by a genuine *philosophy* of organization, aiming to determine systematically the concept that is in need of determination: the concept of organization. As far as a philosophical *exposition* of the concept of organization is concerned, the available material is of only rudimentary

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68   See on this chapter one.

69   Such perspectives are addressed, for example, by Diest, *Doordachte organsatie*, Geus, *Organisatietheorie*, Scott, *Organizations*, or Morgan, *Images.*

relevance (by contrast, it is all the more relevant for a doctrinal elaboration of the concept of organization). This relevance has already become manifest: it was by means of a phenomenological consideration that we have been able to come up with a general concept of organization based on *organization theory*. It is this phenomenologically established concept that needs to be exposed philosophically.

Regarding this exposition, a closer look at the 'perspectives' distinguished in organizational research and philosophy of organization results in additional relevant material determinations. In the next two sections, some material aspects will be emphasized successively. These aspects are part of the meaning of the concept of organization to expose; hence, the respective aspects make the concept of organization 'understandable'. Methodologically this implies that we continue the phenomenological consideration, of course, with a view to the subsequent exposition within the framework of Hegel's philosophy of spirit.

2.6   *Organization and Freedom*

The first issue that seems relevant is the fact that organization is immediately linked to *freedom*. Not least in the classical texts of organization theory does the issue of organization appertain to a dimension eminently significant for freedom: organization theory contributes to a better life altogether.[70] Occasionally,

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70   Taylor, *Principles of Management*, p. 5, for instance, begins his founder's essay even with a nod to a speech by Roosevelt on "national efficiency." The principles of "scientific management" are supposed to be "applicable to all kinds of human activities" (Ibid., p. 7), to "all social activities" (Ibid., p. 8). See also Taylor's remarks on the relevance of these principles for any kind of "work," (Ibid., pp. 40, 97 ff., 126, etc.) as well as his statements on the purpose of management: ensuring the "maximum of prosperity" for the employer and the employee (Ibid., pp. 9 ff.). Prosperity, here, is not restricted to the financial aspect but relates to maximal efficiency; therefore, everybody does the work most suitable to him or her. The societal relevance of a "complete revolution in the mental attitude and the habits" (Ibid., pp. 131, cf. 100), thus, of the meaning of organization, is emphasized by Taylor in two prominent spots: the issue of national efficiency is addressed both at the beginning and at the end (Ibid., pp. 136 ff., cf. also p. 14); here, Taylor is of the opinion that humans ("the whole people," "the whole country") because of its merits—cooperation and harmony, maximal output, development of participants to maximal efficiency, and welfare—have a "right" to scientific management (Ibid., pp. 136 with 141 f., cf. 138 f.).— Fayol, to mention another founding father of organization theory, is fully convinced that the principles of management he developed are significant for "all undertakings, large or small, industrial, commercial, political, religious or any other" (Fayol, *Management*, pp. x, xxi, cf. xv f., 41 f.). He particularly rejects the widespread view that business organizations and the corporate sector are organizationally opposed to each other (as nowadays 'New

in recent meta-theoretical considerations of organization, the aspect of freedom has taken center stage.

For De Geus, the state can be conceived of as an organization, as it concerns an artificial (created) order of joint action in order to achieve certain purposes (peace, security, justice, etcetera). Yet 'modern' organizations like bureaucracies or business enterprises differ essentially from a state. In contrast to the state, such organizations are suborders of the society, even requiring a volitional act to become (formally) a member (whereas we are born as members of a state).[71] The concepts of organization De Geus distinguishes—the rational, integrating, and libertarian concept of organization—are developed following the concept of freedom.

The *rational* concept of organization conceives of the members of an organization merely as means, not as free beings (persons); wishes and needs of the members are subordinated to the technical requirements of the system. By contrast, with the integrating and the libertarian concept of organization, concepts emerge that do not suppress freedom but are focused on freedom: they intend to "organize freedom."[72] Within the *integrating* concept of organization, this leads to conceiving of organization as something that at the same time is a means and an end: as a self-actualization of humans and as a means to

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Public Management' also holds): all undertakings, regardless of whether private or public, require planning, organization, command, coordination, control, and hence, the general principles of management that underlie those principles (see my chap. 6, footnote 86). The same applies to, for instance, "the home": like any other undertaking, the household needs 'management', videlicet it needs planning, organization, coordination, and control; the same pertains to the state (Ibid., p. 96). For Barnard, *Functions*, p. 3, organization formally is the "concrete process by which social action is largely accomplished." His investigations into the function of the executive are in no way restricted to commercial enterprises (Ibid., pp. 6 f., cf. 3 f., 69 ff., 154, 245 f., etc.). Interestingly enough, he sees the search for "universals of organization" thoroughly thwarted by the traditionally dominant focus on the nature of the state and the church, losing sight of the organization as the foundation of such entities too (Ibid., pp. xxix, cf. xxx f., 69 f., 285).—And Follett, *Dynamic Administration*, for example, constantly emphasizes that the basic principles of organization concern social behavior as such; they are decisive for the welfare of people, regardless of whether on the level of public administration, economy, or society. She firmly rejects a 'departmentalization' of our thinking, as it is founded in principles that precede all differentiation in economic, psychological, ethical thinking, etcetera concerning human behavior as such (Ibid., pp. 183 ff.); organizations are about "control by effective unity" (Ibid., p. 184). Follet takes organization to be a positive condition of freedom (Ibid., pp. 306 ff.).

71   Geus, *Organisatietheorie*, p. 5.

72   Ibid., p. 43.

actualizing oneself. *In* and *through* organizations, humans actualize themselves as free beings. Accordingly, members of the organization are not conceived of as mere parts of a machine lacking will but as intelligent and independent participants; and the organization is conceptualized as a whole of active (free) parts.[73] The integrating concept of organization integrates the members into the organization process of shaping reality. It understands organization as a formation of the will and explores how desires, needs, and concerns of the members as free and equal persons can be taken into account in the process of (self)formation, in order to reconcile the requirements of the system or the whole (stability, control, order, etcetera) and the concerns of the individual members or parts (participation, self-actualization, respect, etcetera).[74] The *libertarian* concept of organization radicalizes the freedom oriented approach of the integrating concept. It conceives of organization as something that is consciously created to actualize the freedom and equality of humans; hence, self-regulation takes center stage and is placed over the requirements of the whole.[75]

It becomes apparent that whereas the rational concept of organization emphasizes the order of the parts, the integrating concept of organization is concerned with creating structures of participation, and the libertarian concept of organization focuses on self-regulation of the parts. The first intends to eliminate uncertainty and instability or to grant certainty and stability. The second, in turn, aims to coordinate the needs, desires, and concerns of the participants and to achieve a common formation of the will. The third, by contrast, goes for unconditional freedom of the individual. Correspondingly, in the first case, the organization (unity, the whole) prevails over the members (parts), in the second, the unity of organization (the whole) and members (parts) prevails, and in the third the individual (parts) as an autonomous unity prevails over the whole (the organization). In the rational concept of organization, freedom is focused on securing the welfare of the participants. As a consequence, heteronomy (by governance, administration, command, etcetera) dominates. The integrating concept of organization, by contrast, is concerned with participation. The libertarian concept of organization, finally, carries the sword of freedom (however, in a merely egological sense).

Van Diest too develops the concept of organization in terms of freedom. He understands organizations as "products of modernity," as products of our

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73   Ibid., pp. 55 ff., 68 ff., 81 ff.

74   Ibid., pp. 486 f.

75   Ibid., pp. 102 ff., 118 ff., 124 f.

"modern" way of thinking and acting.[76] To understand organizations, the "inner nature and dynamics" of modernity should be understood. This closely hangs together with the Enlightenment, and hence, with its main source of inspiration: freedom and its development.[77] Modernity is conceived of by Van Diest as a thinking and acting that is conducted in the context of actualizing freedom. Organizations, then, are particular forms of actualizing freedom; they result from the process of social differentiation within modern society.[78] For Van Diest, organizations are "flywheels for realizing concrete freedom" in a twofold manner: with regard to actualizing freedom for the members of the organization (organizational level) and with regard to actualizing freedom for the members of the society in which the organization operates (level of society).[79]

Organization theory explores the structure of conscious, purpose-oriented and coordinated joint action, that is to say, the "organizational structure." According to the three concepts of organization Van Diest distinguishes, this structure can be conceived of as "mechanic," "organic," and "cultural" (that is to say, as a cultural community).[80] The relation between these three concepts is conceived of by Van Diest along within the framework of the concept of freedom.[81] By identifying organizations with commercial enterprises,[82]

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76   Compare for this and what follows, Diest, *Doordachte organsatie*, pp. 12 f.

77   These relations are addressed rather frequently. Van Diest refers to P. Gay, *Enlightment: An Interpretation* (New York: Knopf, 1969), C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), and J. I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

78   Diest, *Doordachte organsatie*, p. 211.

79   Ibid., p. 214.

80   Ibid., p. 215. The analyses and the accompanying solution of Van Diest is somewhat impaired, as he criticizes the fact that organization is mainly conceived of as opposed to its environment (Ibid., p. 211) and then brings in his concept of organization as a cultural community, which is thought to be more fundamental and encompassing (see, for instance, Ibid., pp. 289 ff.). However, the idea that organizations should be conceived of in relation to their environment, or even that they therefore should be thought to be "open systems" (see, for instance, Scott, *Organizations*, chap. 4), is already a part of organization *theory*. A *philosophy* of organization should translate this phenomenologically traceable position 'into the concept', instead of identifying itself with it.

81   Diest, *Doordachte organsatie*, pp. 215 f.

82   —though merely backhandedly, and not as a result of a conceptual development. This leads to the blurring of the general and particular determinations of organization. This is all the more regrettable, for theoretical reasons, as Van Diest, as shown in the text, brings in a wide concept of organization. The restriction to commercial enterprises would require an argumentation of its own.

Van Diest holds that the continuity of the organization requires profit, and, by implication, economic effectivity and technical (organizational) efficiency, with the latter being derived from the former, and hence, understood economically.[83] Organization as a 'technical' actor entails a relation of means and ends: The organization as a purpose-oriented entity presupposes, on the one hand, a purpose to which it is related to as a means, whereas, on the other hand, the organization as an economic actor determines its own purpose, presupposing itself as the factor that actualizes this purpose. Hence, the organization is a means and an end at the same time, or as Van Diest also puts it: "*condition* of itself (as a *goal-setting* actor) as well as its own means (as an *instrument*)."[84] In short, the concept of organization is in itself contradictory. The three concepts of organization Van Diest discusses each offer a particular solution for this contradiction. The respective solutions reconcile organization as a goal setting entity and as being a means, or as we could put it, they reconcile freedom and necessity.

a) The *mechanic* concept of organization places the aspect of the goal or goal setting completely *outside* of the organization: The goal or goal setting is conceived of as an *external* 'given' and organization merely as a means to accomplishing this external given (in commercial enterprises, normally the 'entrepreneur' sets the purpose to be realized). As a result, the freedom of the organization is reduced to *the way in which it actualizes the goal*; concerning the goal itself, it is unfree. Its freedom, thus, is freedom as the rationality of the means, of shaping the organization as a means (concerning the goal itself, only the entrepreneur is free).[85] This leads to a, as we can say, 'formal' organization (an entirety of rules, see above, the rational concept of organization). The organization *is* as a (continual) actualization of an external purpose by its formal structure.

b) The *organic* concept of organization, by contrast, puts the purpose into the instrument, and hence, *internalizes* it: The organization is the end and at the same time the means (instrument) to achieve this end, that is to say within the context of the organic concept of organization, to survive (and to grow).[86] Everything (inside and outside of the organization) is a mere means for this self-preservative drive (end). As a consequence, societal purposes are also drawn back into individuals (the organization), whereas in the mechanic

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83   Ibid., p. 216.
84   Ibid., p. 216.
85   Ibid., pp. 216 ff.
86   Cf. Ibid., pp. 216 with 230 ff.

concept the goals to set primarily are dealing with 'external' desires ('market', 'customer', 'society', etcetera) that have to be fulfilled.

c) The concept of organization as a *cultural community*, finally, aims to solve the contradiction in such a way that each means as a means becomes an end, and each end as an end becomes a means. That is to say, the organization is a goal in itself and as a goal in itself again a means (instrument).[87] Therefore, the *technical* ideal (the idea of instrumentality), guiding the mechanic and organic concept of organization, is overcome here. It transpires that the aspects that are on the one hand decisive for the economic survival of the organization, videlicet its economic effectivity, are on the other hand excluded from the technical idea—creativity (which is for Van Diest the power of unique articulation of meaning) and intersubjectivity (which is for Van Diest truly personal relationships).[88] Thus, organizations appear as entities that are characterized by creativity and intersubjectivity, while at the same time turning themselves into instruments (means) in order to be economically successful. Creativity and intersubjectivity have themselves become production factors.

This concept of organization criticizes the technical idea as instrumental rationality. While aspects like abstraction, formal analysis, division, feasibility, plannability, foreseeability, in short, controllability, superpose necessary conditions of existence like creativity and intersubjectivity, the technical idea undermines the possibility of its own application. Whereas the mechanic concept and the organic concept of organization eliminate idiosyncratic features (creativity, spontaneity, individuality), it becomes apparent that such features are fundamental for the concept of organization as a cultural community. Hence, organizations are not mere instruments for achieving economic or societal goals but at the same time goals in themselves, if they are to be effective as instruments.[89] The cultural concept of organization aims to reveal how organizations as instruments have to be conceived of beyond the technical

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87   Ibid., pp. 216 with 246 ff.

88   Ibid., pp. 248, cf. 249 ff., 256.

89   Van Diest's distinctive positioning of the cultural concept of organization, especially of the reduction of the organic concept to instrumentality, gives rise to further questions. At least this applies if one takes a look at the integrative (organic) concept of organization of Van Geus that is invoked against the rational concept of organization; likewise, Scott positions the natural system definition (that is, the organic concept of organization) against the rational system definition (that is, the rational concept of organization). For Scott, as he puts it with Bennis, the rational system definition offers "organizations without people," the natural system definition "people without organizations" (Scott, *Organizations*, pp. 54 with 78). However, such questions are primarily issues for the social sciences, rather than for philosophy.

idea (instrumental rationality). Themes like 'meaning', 'cooperation', 'organizational culture', 'organization's vision', 'engagement and growth of the person', 'creativity', and 'values' bring the moment of giving intrinsic meaning into the issue of organization (understood by Van Diest, however, as an economic actor). Culture, as we can put it, self-determination, and hence, freedom, is a condition of the possibility of economic effectivity of organizations. Although the technical idea in the instrumental sense is shown to be inadequate, it remains the task of management, as Van Diest correctly notices, to assure that the commitment of the "individual power of freedom" of the employees does indeed contribute to the productivity which is organizationally required.[90]

Whereas according to the mechanic concept of organization freedom is located both in the informal organization and the customers, with the organic concept, as Van Diest holds, freedom enters the scene also on a meta-level, namely on the level of staff departments. For the cultural concept of organization, freedom is the "heart of production of societal added value," the free action of the employee is the "starting point."[91] General rules and procedures are indeed necessary, but they do not "determine" organizational activity; in fact, they "support" it.[92] The cultural concept of organization reveals that organization is not governed by abstract rules but a self-determined social network in which such rules first obtain their meaning.

2.7   *Organization: Further Basic Features*

Discussing organizations from the perspective of freedom is just as correct as it is necessary. Organizations result from human activity, and hence, they are figures of freedom. In modernity, they are even figures of freedom that have to shape freedom. This constellation offers at the very least a good entrance into addressing organization from the perspective of Hegel. However, before exploring this perspective, I shall briefly highlight some further material features of organization that are relevant for a Hegelian formal determination, that is to say, for an exposition of the concept of organization. In his handbook of organization theory, Scott distinguishes three 'perspectives', 'paradigms' or 'definitions' concerning organization. He offers relevant elaborations regarding the content of these perspectives. Taking them into consideration allows

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90   Diest, *Doordachte organsatie*, pp. 260 with 269 ff.

91   Ibid., p. 290.

92   Ibid., pp. 290 ff. As Van Diest takes the 'project organization' as the relevant paradigm, hence, making the function of management part of the work, it becomes unclear how the cultural concept of organization is able to cover the whole range of organizations, instead of remaining restricted to knowledge-intensive organizations.

us to conclude the revisit of phenomenology, that is the phase of gathering organizational material phenomenologically.

Basically, the most relevant aspects have been mentioned already in the context of De Geus and Van Diest, in particular concerning the definition of organization as a 'rational system' and as a 'natural system'. Scott not only distinguishes "elements" supposed to belong to any organization (social structure, participants, goals, technology, environment)[93] and determines organizations "first and foremost" as "systems";[94] actually, what matters now, is that he also offers three 'definitions' of organization. As for Hatch and Cunliffe, De Geus, and Van Diest, for Scott too these definitions determine fundamental material qualifications of organization as the subject matter of organization theory. The three definitions each lead to a different concept of organization. Like Hatch and Cunliffe, Scott calls these fundamental points of view perspectives. Hence, each definition articulates a perspective on organization. However, it is, philosophically, not very convincing first to distinguish features of *any* organization and, subsequently, to point out the *perspectival* determinacy of organization studies.[95] Nonetheless, Scott's classification is informative.

a) According to the *rational system definition*, organizations are "collectivities oriented to the pursuit of relatively specific goals and exhibiting a relatively highly formalized social structure."[96] The division of organization within the spectrum of social phenomena is achieved via two characteristics: pursuing relatively *specific* (*explicit*) *goals* and exhibiting a relatively *high level of formalization.* Organization is conceived of as an instrument for actualizing specific purposes. Correspondingly, organization is thought to be a conscious, purpose-oriented cooperation of participants. The purposes form clear guidelines for their behavior as well as for the organizational structure. Concepts like efficiency, optimizing, design, authority, guidelines, and control qualify organization as a theme of organization theory more precisely. Within the framework of this definition, organizational research is primarily directed towards the normative or formal structure of organization. For this reason, the roles of the participants are defined without reference to the persons who fulfill them ('job description'). The rules of conduct are explicit, and hence, the organizational structure is formal and, by implication, a consciously designed instrument for actualizing purposes efficiently. In this sense the organizational structure is objectified. Such a structure accomplishes 'bounded rationality'

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93   Scott, *Organizations*, pp. 18 ff. See for this section the entire first chapter of Scott's book.
94   Ibid., p. 24.
95   In fact, Scott favors from the start one of the three definitions: the 'open system definition'.
96   Ibid., pp. 26 f. See for that in detail, chapter two.

(Simon). The rationality of organization consists in its structure, not in the subjects or participants—'organization without people' (Bennis).

b) For the "*natural system definition*," by contrast, organizations are "collectivities whose participants are pursuing multiple interests, both disparate, but who recognize the value of perpetuating the organization as an important resource. The informal structure of relations that develop among participants is more influential in guiding the behavior of participants than is the formal structure."[97] Whereas the rational system definition conceptualizes organization as a normative structure, the natural system definition directs its attention to the *actual structure of behavior* of the members. Organization is a natural system. Although the natural system definition acknowledges the relevance of specific goal determinacy and formalization, it argues that for understanding organization, other aspects are more important. It emphasizes in particular features that organization has *in common* with other social phenomena, and hence, the general characteristics of organization as a social phenomenon (whereas the rational system definition focuses on the differences: organization as a consciously designed collectivity). It is revealed that organizations are not at all merely means (instruments) for actualizing set ends; in fact, organizations are above all social groups that adapt themselves and *survive* within the conditions of their individual circumstances. The aspect of vitality, of survival of social phenomena arises: the final goal of social phenomena is thought to be survival. Whereas according to the rational system definition, organization is thought to be a mechanism, characterized by a designed structure, according to the natural system definition, organization is an *organism*, its structure correspondingly characterized by *spontaneous* or *natural development.* For this concept of organization, understanding organization involves not so much addressing the designed ('formal') structure but mainly the *informal* organizational structure, the factual patterns of behavior. The organizational structure is both formal and informal. The informal structure is thought to be primary. This structure, however, is based exactly in the *personal* qualities of the respective participants and the interpersonal relationships resulting from them. The informal organizational structure co-determines the formal. Participants of the organization are not conceptualized as 'hired hands' but as persons with individual talents, values, interests, and motives.[98] Precisely because the formal structure abstracts from this, the rational system definition proves to be inefficient, even irrational. In actual organizations, the formal structure functions as a diffuse background of the actual, informal structure.

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97   Ibid., p. 28 See for that in detail, chapter three.
98   One sees here how Van Diest's division becomes fluid; see my footnote 89.

Organizational research should concern itself with this structure—'people without organization' (Bennis).

c) The "open system definition," finally, determines organizations as "congeries of interdependent flows and activities linking shifting coalitions of participants embedded in wider material-resource and institutional environments."[99] Whereas the rational and the natural concept of organization mainly address the internal structure of organization ('closed structure'), in the concept of organization as an *open* system, the relation of the organization to its *environment* takes center stage. This concept of organization follows the unifying aspiration of science connected with what is called the general system theory (Bertalanffy): objects are mostly systems, and hence, an assemblage of parts that interdepend on one another. Whereas mechanic systems are relatively simple and stable, social systems are relatively *complex* and *variable* and the relations between their parts relatively *loose.* The more complex the systems are, the more loosely connected the parts. More complex systems are better adjusted to self-maintenance and renewal, more dependent on information flows, more able to grow and change, and more open to the environment (Boulding). Particularly concerning organizations and organizational research, it turns out that organizations are *cybernetic* (*self-regulating*) *loosely connected, open, and hierarchical systems.* Again, the actual behavior of the organization, namely its *operative activity* comes to the fore. The organizational behavior of participants is neither to be conceived of as a unitary unity (rational concept of organization) nor as an organic unity (natural concept of organization) but as a loosely connected coalition of shifting interest groups. As the self-maintenance of open systems depends on their capability to deal with environmental influences, its boundaries are hard to determine. At the same time, the environment is shown to be a source for the maintenance of the system, its diversity, and variety. Systems consist of subsystems and are themselves part of more encompassing systems. Organization makes up a complex system whose parts are hierarchically ordered.

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99   Ibid., p. 29. See for this in detail, chapter four.

The Very Idea of Organization—A Hegelian Account

Based on the state of affairs within organization studies, chapter five has resulted in a general concept of organization with a maximal extension. This concept of organization, immediately operative on the level of organization theory, is the material that has to be determined speculatively within the framework of an exposition—the concern of chapter six. Its first step enters organization in Hegel's philosophy of spirit topologically and expounds the place of organization in Hegel's system of philosophy (1). The second step deals with organization in Hegel's philosophy of spirit speculatively (2). It proves to be the case that the exposed concept of organization has its foundation both in the material of Hegel's doctrine of *Sittlichkeit* and in the logic of the concept. In this way, a highly relevant issue for further contemporary speculative comprehension occurs; an issue that as such is not addressed by Hegel himself. As a philosophical spin-off, it also becomes methodologically clear how it is scientifically possible at all to explore post-Hegelian constellations in a Hegelian fashion.

1 Organization in Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit, Topologically

1.1 *Thematic Affinity*
In chapter five, material concerning the determinacy of organization was gathered phenomenologically. On the basis of this material, it becomes apparent that the attempt to determine organization is related to a number of themes addressed in Hegel's philosophy, especially in his philosophy of spirit.[1]

The aspect of survival, so prominent in the natural concept of organization, for instance, is taken into account in the context of the emergence of spirit from nature—spirit as "the idea that has achieved its being-for-itself"[2]—as well as elaborated on in the chapter on "Anthropology," making the spirit as "nature spirit" an issue of discussion and overcoming the opposition between "body" and "soul," which is the relevant opposition on the anthropological

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1 Hence, the following refers to the elaboration on the relevant themes in chapter five.

2 *Enz* § 381.

level of the determinacy of freedom.[3] The matter of freedom of the subject, of extreme significance for the concept of organization, however, has certainly not been treated sufficiently with these elaborations. As a nature spirit, spirit, properly speaking, is not at all a free spirit: a spirit that determines itself. By contrast, Hegel's philosophy of spirit is designed in such a way that spirt first has to achieve an existence in which it is fully freed from forms that do not correspond to its concept, that is to say, freedom. Spirit achieves this freedom only through its own activity; the philosophy of spirit addresses the spirit as "producer of its own freedom."[4] Formally, the essence of spirit is freedom and the spirit in the realm of spirit is 'free spirit'.[5]

This free spirit manifests itself in three forms of itself.[6] As *subjective* spirit, the development of free spirit concerns this spirit itself in a narrow sense. Therewith, the essence of spirit is not only freedom, but because the "concept" of spirit becomes "for it," its being (*Sein*) becomes "with itself, that is, becomes free" (*bei sich, d.i. frei zu sein*).[7] Hence, the development of subjective spirit is one of increasing self-knowledge; the levels of its development are levels of spirit's self-knowledge, and therefore also of the absolute idea as spirit. The philosophy of subjective spirit must clarify how spirit determines itself to *knowledge*. From this, three levels of development result: (subjective) spirit "in itself," as "soul" or "nature spirit," progresses to (subjective) spirit "for itself," as "consciousness," and ends with (subjective) spirit in and for itself, as "spirit that determines itself, as subject for itself,"[8] as a subject of theoretical and practical activity. On the first level, Hegel overcomes the opposition between body and soul; on the second, he masters the opposition between (conscious, self-conscious) I and world, enabling him, on the third level, to overcome the opposition between theoretical and practical reason, thinking and willing. Here, spirit finally becomes a free spirit, a spirit that determines itself.[9]

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3 Ibid., §§ 387 ff.—The natural determinacy of an organism, and spirit is always an organism too, has been addressed in the philosophy of nature already (see, for instance, Hegel on the process of genus formation (Ibid., § 367) and on the sex relation (Ibid., § 369)).

4 *TWA* 8, § 382 A.

5 *Enz* §§ 382, 384.

6 Ibid., § 385.

7 Ibid., § 385.

8 Ibid., § 387.

9 Freedom appears to be the ground of determination of the subject. As a consequence, relativism or individualism, accompanying the cultural and libertarian concept of organization, discussed in chapter five, has also been overcome. For Hegel (Ibid., § 380), the subject determines itself as a free spirit according to the universal (general), hence, determines itself truly self.

In the context of the philosophy of subjective spirit, expounding the concept of the subject, one can, among other things, find considerations about human creativity,[10] about its theoretical[11] and its practical[12] competence of knowledge, including the various grounds of determination of this competence, for instance by feeling,[13] impulses and choice,[14] happiness,[15] and, indeed, freedom.[16] In a subjective-logical fashion, Hegel carves out the whole scale of possibilities of self-determination (goal-setting, instrumentality), starting with the most conditioned form up to the unconditioned.

The issue of freedom or of subjectivity as personality returns in the philosophy of objective spirit (as a legal person, a moral person, and a person of *Sittlichkeit*).[17] In the philosophy of objective spirit, that is the figure dealt with after the philosophy of subjective spirit, the free spirit is addressed. The free spirit objectifies itself into a spiritual world, which it gradually makes adequate to itself: into a world, in which freedom 'exists as necessity'. In this form of its activity, the spirit is "*objective*" spirit, spirit that brings about a spiritual world, a reality in which spirit actualizes freedom.[18] It is not before objective spirit that we are dealing with a plurality of subjects.[19] They all turned the existence of their freedom to their end.

This leads to all kinds of problems of coordination. As in the case of the rational concept of organization, Hegel too shows that although a system of rules is necessary, taken by itself, this system is 'abstract' (see "abstract right")[20] and requires for the sake of its own efficacy not only certain predispositions of the subject (see "morality")[21] but also its embedding in shared forms of normativity (see "*Sittlichkeit*").[22] Such a constellation comes to the fore in the criticism of the rational concept of organization by the protagonists of a natural and a cultural concept of organization. The 'figures' of objective spirit are *conditions of actualizing* a truly free spirit.

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10   Ibid., §§ 455 ff.
11   Ibid., §§ 445 ff.
12   Ibid., §§ 469 ff.
13   Ibid., §§ 471 ff.
14   Ibid., §§ 473 ff.
15   Ibid., §§ 479 ff.
16   Ibid., §§ 481 ff.
17   Ibid., §§ 483 ff.
18   Ibid., § 385.
19   Cf. Ibid., §§ 485 ff.
20   Ibid., §§ 487 ff.
21   Ibid., §§ 503 ff.
22   Ibid., §§ 513 ff.

According to Hegel too, the activity of the subject is dependent on a natural and personal environment. Not only is spirit itself also nature, as a free spirit it has simply to realize its purpose or freedom, in an "external pre-given objectivity."[23] This objectivity consists again of a variety of circles, that is, subsystems, each of them a part of more encompassing circles and eventually part of an all-inclusive system. This all-inclusive system is the 'idea' as a processual subject–object unity that is structured according to its function for self-knowledge. For Hegel, philosophy is "essentially" a system.[24] And what applies to philosophy as a whole, applies to each of its parts: they always concern "circles rounded in themselves," whereby the whole of philosophy, as Hegel famously puts it, is a "circle of circles" in which each circle, as a moment, is at the same time a "necessary moment" of the whole.[25] Hence, in Hegel's conception, the encompassing system (like every subsystem) is related to *thought as the principle of objectivity*—not, like in non-philosophical systems of reality, merely to a kind of reality (society, nature, world, galaxy, etcetera): the system is founded 'idealistically'.[26]

Differing from the concepts of organization discussed in chapter five, Hegel does not hive off the indicated aspects, with the result that, for example,

- by stressing the natural determinacy of humans, their spiritual, and as a consequence their liberal (*freiheitliche*) determinacy is lost from view;
- taking into consideration the embeddedness of humans in real (natural, social) systems of any kind, blocks an adequate understanding of the possibility and capability of self-determination,[27] reducing humans to a mere means for actualizing external given purposes;

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23   Ibid., § 483.

24   Ibid., § 14. Cf. *PG* p. 11.

25   *Enz* § 483. Cf. also *I* p. 504.

26   Cf. C. Krijnen, *Philosophie als System: Prinzipientheoretische Untersuchungen zum Systemgedanken bei Hegel, im Neukantianismus und in der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008).

27   It is significant that Scott discusses organizations in the context of the perspective of a system, qualifying them, however, as cybernetic systems and open systems (W. R. Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems*, 5th edn. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003), pp. 85 ff.), see also the title of Scott's chapter four). According to Boulding's classification of system types, to which Scott (Ibid., pp. 84 with 85 and 89) refers, however, neither cybernetic nor open systems are social systems—organizations, though, are social systems.

- humans are taken into account as spiritual beings, however, this spiritual determinacy is conceived of in a way that actualizing freedom is just culturally conditioned ('culturalization');
- the mere power of self-determination (freedom) of the subject becomes the issue ('negative freedom'), without, however, at the same time giving thought to the positive material elements that belong to freedom ('positive freedom') as the ground of self-determination.

1.2   *The Place of Organization as a Figure of Spirit*

Where in Hegel's philosophy of sprit, then, is the phenomenon of organization to be located initially? That is to say, where in Hegel's philosophy of spirit should it be located conceptually as a topic for philosophical investigation?

The answer that organization is a figure of *free* spirit could pave the way for finding its appropriate place. There are many good reasons for taking organization as a figure of the free spirit. They come to light by focusing on the general and most comprehensive determination of organization that underlies the discussed concepts, definitions, perspectives, paradigms, etcetera of organization. Organizations consists of humans, cooperating in order to achieve a purpose or several purposes. As Scott puts it, organizations are "social structures created by individuals to support the collaborative pursuit of specific goals."[28]

From this, we can conclude first that the phenomenon of organization, as addressed by organizational research, is not a phenomenon of *subjective* spirit. In the philosophy of subjective spirit, the development of the free spirit concerns the relation to itself. Therefore, no subject is already constituted, let alone a plurality of subjects: the subject first is the result of the process of development (constitution) of subjective spirit. Starting with (subjective) spirit "in itself," as "soul" or "nature spirit," the development progresses to (subjective) spirit "for itself," as "consciousness," and ends with (subjective) spirit in and for itself, as "spirit that determines itself, as subject for itself,"[29] as a subject of theoretical and practical activity. Spirit finally becomes a free spirit,[30] a spirit that "knows" and "wants" itself as free, spirit that has freedom, the "essence" of spirit, to its determination and makes its own freedom to its "purpose."[31] Only such a spirit is capable of theoretical and practical self-determination. This kind of spirit is a presupposition of possible goal-setting and of its subsequent

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28   Ibid., p. 11.
29   *Enz* § 387.
30   Cf. Ibid., § 385.
31   Ibid., §§ 481 with 482, cf. 469.

realization in an externally found objectivity—as is the case within organizations: in organizations, cooperation between free spirits takes place.

Strictly speaking, organization does not belong to the realm of subjective spirit but to that of *objective* spirit. It is a figure of the spirit that knows and wants itself as free, and hence, has freedom, which is the essence of spirit, to its determination and makes its own freedom to its purpose. This form of spirit realizes itself in an externally found objectivity, transforming this objectivity into a world that is determined by free spirit. This dimension of objectifying freedom represents a departure from the subjective dimension as a 'relation to itself'. Within the context of the philosophy of objective spirit, Hegel conceives of free spirit as a "purpose activity,"[32] striving to bring the inner (essential, free) determination of spirit into being. Organization is not a natural product: it is a result of humans giving shape to the world, and hence, the result of freedom or free-spiritual endeavors—a shape of humans that are the subject of theoretical and practical activity.

1.3   *Organization versus Figures of Objective Spirit*

All these affinities with Hegel's philosophy of spirit should not lead to losing sight of another issue no less important—'organization' is as such not thematic in Hegel's doctrine of free spirit and its figures (although aspects of organization are occasionally touched upon). This is a significant insight. It will continuously play a role and in the course of that obtain a more precise determination. What matters now is to set organization apart from the figures of objective spirit, while at the same time making plausible that the concept of organization contains a concern that deserves to be translated into a philosophical concept.

The phenomenology of the concept of organization resulted in organization as the form of conscious cooperative purposive activity. The philosophy of organization has to determine this form. In doing so, it determines what conscious cooperative purposive activity itself is.

If we distinguish, regarding this form, 'effectivity' ((degree of) goal-achievement) and 'efficiency' (relation between goal-achievement and means used), it seems tempting to conceive of organization as a 'technical actor' and the idea guiding organization as the 'technical idea', and hence, as a form of 'instrumental' rationality (end-means relation, as paradigmatic for the rational concept of organization). Organization, then, would be something like the technical arrangement of goal-actualization; in turn, organization sciences would take shape as technical sciences. This understanding of organization,

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32   Ibid., § 484.

however, fails, because a) humans are part of the means to be deployed, and b) the stated goals, for which the means are to deploy, are the result of human (free) endeavors. Technics (*Technik*, technology) immediately transforms nature, organization immediately transforms humans.[33] Technics (τέχνη: art, skill) refers to artificial devices, machines, or production processes, in short, to the utilization of nature (means) for human purposes.[34] Nature is used, organization, in contrast, uses humans.

It is therefore hardly a surprise that the purposeful organization of figures of objective spirit was and is mainly discussed in terms of 'instrumental rationality'. The mere instrumental view on actualizing purposes, however, has been overcome in principle within contemporary transcendental philosophy (by the economic-social idea); actually, the instrumental view has neither been guiding Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit—which is a doctrine of the objectification of *free* spirit.[35] Utility and organization are themselves moments of the unconditionedness (freedom) of the subject. Hence, there is no longer any need to consider the topic of 'mere' instrumental reason in what follows.[36] On the contrary, organization should be comprehended as a moment of the unconditionedness of figures of objective spirit.

In this regard, it has to be emphasized that organizations concern utility. Organizations are conscious cooperative alliances of humans in order to

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[33]   As technics itself is an endeavor of humans, the concept of organization stands at an even higher level than the concept of technics. See for the concept of technics, for instance: C. Hubig, A. Huning and G. Ropohl, *Nachdenken über Technik: Die Klassiker der Technikphilosophie* (Berlin: Edition Sigma, 2000); K. Hübner, 'Technik', in H. Krings, H. M. Baumgartner and C. Wild (eds.), *Handbuch philosophischer Grundbegriffe*, 5 vols. (München: Kösel, 1973), v, pp. 1475–85; F. Rapp and D. Schubbe, *Philosophie der Technik* (Hagen: FernUniversität, 2012); D. Wandschneider, *Technikphilosophie* (Bamberg: Buchner, 2004).

[34]   'Social engineering', strictly speaking, just expresses a basic misunderstanding of what it means to be a means for ends. As Kant (*GMS* IV, 434 f.) once pointedly formulated: humans, in contrast to everything else in the realm of purposes, do not only have a price (a "relative value") but dignity too ("intrinsic value"). The reason for this is that humans are not only nature but also ends in themselves.

[35]   Cf. chap. 4.

[36]   On the level of the logic, Hegel, in his chapter on teleology, surmounted the mere external relationship between end and means. He shows that in externality the end possesses its own moment (*II* p. 399). In laying hold of the means, the concept posits itself as the essence of the object, which exists in itself (*Enz* § 212). On the level of spirit, the objective spirit is free, and hence, knows and wants itself as free spirit, and is in either way determinable and determined by the universal, which is reason itself, and, as a consequence, certainly not reduced to instrumental rationality.

achieve purposes; goal-determined, goal-oriented communities, focused on actualizing purposes. Organization as a topic or figure of objective spirit, however, does not concern these objective figures themselves as unconditional forms of shaping human subjectivity or forms of free spirit. Organization concerns another dimension: the dimension of inner purposefulness of these objective figures of freedom, videlicet their inner arrangement according to the idea or value of the utile. Hence, the arrangement of objective figures in conformity with the purpose of utility becomes the issue to consider; an arrangement, whose free form itself is guaranteed by the figures of objective spirit themselves: they are figures of free spirit.

These considerations differ from Hegel's insofar as Hegel's philosophy of spirit and its development are guided by self-knowledge of the idea as spirit, intending to comprehend spirit as the "producer of its own freedom" and the development of the concept of spirit as spirit "freeing" itself from "all forms of existence not adequate to its concept."[37] Whereas the philosophy of spirit leads to a concept of spirit that knows and wants itself as free, the philosophy of *objective* spirit intends to comprehend this free spirit in its free, objective existence. It becomes apparent in what figures freedom comes into the world, namely first as "right," then as "morality," and eventually as "*Sittlichkeit*."[38] Right, morality, and *Sittlichkeit* are figures the idea gives to itself, figures, in which the idea manifests or actualizes itself, and hence forms, in which the idea provides its own existence. It is in this way that Hegel comprehends the existence of freedom. The figures of existence of free spirit as objective spirit themselves and their relationships are the subject matter of Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit.

In the course of this philosophy, it proves to be the case that the respective figures are conceptually incapable of preserving freedom. This inadequacy of a particular figure of the existence of freedom compels the progress to the next figure. The function that a certain figure has for freedom, and hence, the determinacy of this figure, is the issue, not the inner arrangement of a figure of objective spirit according to the idea of utility as the effectivity and efficiency of conscious actualization of purposes.[39] Effectivity, here, is not focused on the function for freedom a figure of objective spirit has, and hence, on the

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37   *TWA*, 8, § 382 A.

38   Cf. *Enz* § 487.

39   These concepts are to be understood in the general sense mentioned, and hence, not from the start in an economically reduced sense (a legal system is useful too—not, however, because it is financially more profitable to have one instead of none, but because it is useful for the freedom of the subject).

relevant form of actualizing purposes itself, but on a concrete content as the purpose that free spirits intend to actualize. As indicated, the focus is not on the presuppositions of successful actualization of purposes: these presuppositions must count as fulfilled, as otherwise there would not exist any actualization of a purpose at all, which would make the question concerning its useful arrangement superfluous. The exposition of the concept of organization and the subsequent development of its principles are the answer to this question.

1.4   *The Place of Organization within Objective Spirit*

With this result, we can push on with the exposition of the concept of organization. The problem that is obviously pressing now concerns its place within Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit: Where does the concept of organization occur? To put it more precisely, where would the concept of organization have occurred as an issue to be comprehended philosophically if Hegel had addressed it specifically? To answer this question, one should be aware of the fact that within the framework of Hegel's method of speculative concept development, a concept can be implicitly effective at a certain place in the system of philosophy although that concept is explicitly addressed later on.[40] Decisive for the place of exposition of a concept is the course of the argumentation itself. As Hegel also puts it, a philosophical division is not "external" but the "immanent differentiation of the concept itself."[41] Therefore, one should to be mindful of the place where the concept of organization, which resulted from revisiting phenomenology, can be captured most appositely.

A first run-through of the philosophy of spirit resulted in *objective* spirit as the place where the concept of organization has to be exposed. Seen more

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40   The famous, much-discussed case in this respect is the beginning of Hegel's *Logik* with 'being' as the indeterminate immediate. The concept of being, obviously, can only be determined by using other concepts, which themselves are in need of determination. Cf. for this discussion Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, pp. 80 ff. The situation in the philosophy of spirit is even more complicated, as the stages of development of the concept do not exist for themselves but are as determinations and stages of spirit "essentially only as moments, states, determinations in the higher stages of development." (*Enz* § 380).

41   *Rph* § 33. See for the method of speculative development of concepts: K. Düsing, 'Syllogistik und Dialektik in Hegels spekulativer Logik', in D. Henrich (ed.), *Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik: Formation und Rekonstruktion* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1986), pp. 15–38; H. F. Fulda, 'Hegels Dialektik als Begriffsbewegung und Darstellungsweise', in R.-P. Horstmann (ed.), *Seminar, Dialektik in der Philosophie Hegels* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978), pp. 124–78; H. F. Fulda, *G.W.F. Hegel* (München: Beck, 2003); M. Forster, 'Hegel's Dialectical Method', in F. C. Beiser (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel* (Cambridge [etc.]: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 130–70; Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 3.4.

closely, objective spirit contains three different forms of actualizing freedom: (abstract) right, morality, and *Sittlichkeit.* It is illuminating to go through these forms *via negativa,* that is to say, by excluding options.

Abstract or formal right, as elaborated on by Hegel,[42] is a system of normative commitments concerning the free will as a person. It yields determinations like property, possession, contract, matter (*Sache*), wrong, crime, punishment, etcetera. As an abstract system of commitments, this figure of objective spirit lacks any form of institutionalization. Hence, it cannot be a candidate for possible organization. Abstract right only contains an abstract rationality of right. As an organized (and guaranteed) legal system, right is addressed on the level of *Sittlichkeit*: in the civil society (see 'administration of justice' (*Rechtspflege*), 'police and corporation' (*Polizei und Korporation*)) as well as in the (substantial) state.[43]

Basically, the same applies to *morality*. Morality concerns the inner constitution of the will of the person, the "will reflected in itself," the "inner" determinacy of the will.[44] At most, moral-anthropological aspects could play a role. Although such aspects concern the self-organization of the subject, they do not belong to the concept of organization current in organization studies. Here, organization is a cooperative constellation of subjects. Determinations like design (*Vorsatz*), responsibility (*Schuld*), intention (*Absicht*), welfare, etcetera are without doubt relevant for organizational phenomena and part of their determinacy. However, like abstract right, they do not qualify such phenomena specifically: as 'inner' determination of the will, they lack the moment of cooperative plurality of subjects, which is constitutive for organization.

As a result, *Sittlichkeit* remains as the adequate place of exposition. Here, the abstractness of both the objectivity of a formal system of rules of right and of the will reflected in itself has been overcome in favor of a substantial will. The existence of freedom as *Sittlichkeit* is the "unity and truth" of both antecedent figures or spheres: of "external world" (abstract right) and "reflected will" (morality). In the sphere of *Sittlichkeit*, freedom exists objectively as well as subjectively: the free will is a substantial will, a will that has the "actuality" adequate to its concept—a free will that is in itself (abstract right) and for itself

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42   *Enz* §§ 488–502; *Rph* §§ 34–104.

43   Civil society requires, for example, a "court of justice" that "recognizes and acts in the interest of right" (*Enz* § 531), and hence, a "public power" (*Rph* § 219). In the context of civil society, right is no longer merely "abstract," "in itself"; on the contrary, it is in its "valid actuality" (Ibid., § 208).

44   *Enz* § 503; cf. *Rph* § 105.

(morality).[45] By overcoming both the abstractness of an abstract system of objective rules and mere subjective self-determination, we have reached concrete life in its objective-spiritual fullness. That is to say, in *Sittlichkeit*, freedom has taken shape as the "living good,"[46] "self-conscious freedom" has become a (second) "nature,"[47] the "absolute ought" turned into "being."[48] How, then, does the concept of organization arise from this concrete togetherness of concrete subjects?

Although particularly the early texts of organization theory offer a rather wide concept of organization, which includes families too, on the basis of the concept of organization gathered phenomenologically—having a relatively high formalized social structure and a relatively specific purpose-determinacy—family in the Hegelian sense becomes no longer relevant. Hegel determines the family even as an "immediate," "natural,"[49] "feeling"[50] spirit. Determinations of abstract right here only play a role as a border-line case.[51] Because of the immediacy of the purpose-determinacy of familial togetherness, its purpose-determinacy is rather unspecific. However, from this immediate or feeling shape of togetherness "independent persons"[52] emerge—civil society.[53]

It is exactly *civil society* which constitutes the proper place to expose the concept of organization within Hegel's philosophy of spirit. Here, we are dealing with independent free spirits that have their particular interests "in their conscious and as their purpose."[54] This forms for Hegel "the one principle of civil society."[55] The "relation"[56] to other such particular persons, all striving to actualize their particular interests—hence, the "mediating relation of independent extremes"[57]—is the other principle.[58] More precisely and by implication,

45   Ibid., § 33 with *Enz* § 487.

46   *Rph* § 142.

47   *Enz* § 513; cf. *Rph* § 151.

48   *Enz* § 514.

49   *Enz* § 517; *Rph* § 157.

50   *Enz* § 518; cf. *Rph* § 158.

51   Cf. *Rph* §§ 159, 176 ff.; *Enz* § 522.

52   *Enz* §§ 517, 521 ff.; cf. *Rph* §§ 157, 175, 180.

53   Cf. *Rph* §§ 157, 181 ff.; *Enz* §§ 517, 523 ff.

54   *Enz*, § 523.

55   *Rph* § 182.

56   Ibid., § 182.

57   *Enz* § 523.

58   *Rph* § 182.

the "self-seeking end in its actualization"[59] concerns a "system of atomism,"[60] a system of "all-around dependence,"[61] a *Sittlichkeit* "lost in its extremes."[62]

Hegel denotes this system initially also as an "external state," as a "state of understanding" or of "need" (*Not- und Verstandesstaat*).[63] In this kind of state, the citizens are private persons that all have their own interest as their purpose; the universal, hence, appears for them merely as a "means." With this, however, they at the same time determine their knowing, wanting, and acting "in conformity with the universal," making themselves into a "link in the chain" of this relation, which is the state.[64] Organization just is such an *external state*, a state of understanding.

1.5   *The Place of Organization within Civil Society*

In order to characterize the concept of organization more in detail via negativa, it makes sense to relate it to the first moment of civil society, that is the "system of needs,"[65] as well as to distinguish organization from 'economy', hence, from a sphere that is of major interest in Hegel's doctrine of civil society (b). In addition, it is important to distinguish between Hegel's perspective of knowledge of civil society and the perspective that is required by a conceptual development of the concept of organization (a).

(a) It firstly can be noted that by determining organization as an external state, organization is not conceived of as merely 'instrumentally': organization has turned into a moment of something higher or more universal that is freedom. This aspect of being a moment of a higher determination of freedom, and hence, of having a specific function for actualizing freedom, constitutes the focus of Hegel's considerations. Accordingly, the civil society is a moment of *Sittlichkeit* between the family and the state-constitution.[66] In particular civil society as a 'self-seeking end in its actualization' and the relation between a 'particular person' and 'universality' in the external state turn the idea into an idea in "bifurcation," the system of all-around dependence into a "relative totality," with the result that the idea is as "inner necessity" only in an "outer

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59   Ibid., § 183.

60   *Enz* § 523.

61   *Rph* § 183.

62   Ibid., § 184.

63   Ibid., § 183; cf. *Enz* § 523. The *Not- und Verstandesstaat* stands in contrast to the "proper political" (*Rph* § 268) or "substantial" state (*Enz* § 534).

64   *Rph* § 187.

65   *Enz* §§ 524 ff.; *Rph* §§ 189 ff.

66   *Enz* § 517; *Rph* § 157.

appearance."[67] By developing itself to totality, the principle of particularity merges into universality, and with that into freedom;[68] the idea "raises" itself via the individuals into freedom and universality of knowing and wanting.[69] The purpose of the civil society is to satisfy the needs in a "stable and universal way, videlicet to secure this satisfaction."[70]

More in detail, civil society contains three moments. The moment of need satisfaction offers the entrance to detect the conditions of the possibility of securing this need satisfaction, insofar as these conditions concern the "actuality" of the "universal" dimension of the "freedom" contained in it: "administration of justice"[71] and "police and corporation."[72] They enable individuals to pursue and to achieve their welfare according to their own mind, while at the same time making the dynamic system of economy into a component of a stable political order. As a result, need satisfaction is guaranteed in a 'stable and universal way'; only then does individual freedom become actual. Hegel certainly does not identify the civil society with the sphere of modern economy. Civil society is a figure of right as the existence of freedom; solely as a moment of the existence of freedom is the modern economy itself possible regarding its rationality, that is to say, possible as a rational expression of modern subjectivity.

Again we see that freedom's functional moments determine the course of Hegel's conceptual development. Hegel addresses the relevance the various figures of objective spirit have for freedom (their 'right' as existence of freedom). Organization theory, by contrast, is interested in the inner arrangement of an objective-spiritual figure in conformity with the idea of utility, understood as efficiency and effectivity of conscious purpose-actualization. However, not only does this mark a difference to the relevant perspective of knowledge. The perspective of knowledge of organization theory also differs from that

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67   *Rph* §§ 147, cf. 186.

68   Ibid., § 186.

69   Ibid., § 187.—With this, not only Hegel's concept of *Bildung* (cultivation, education) comes to light, but with regard to instrumentalizing *Bildung*, Hegel explicitly criticizes the view that *Bildung*, as a progress into the universal, is something "extrinsic," a mere "means"; he refers to the "nature of spirit" and the "end of reason," in particular, that spirit achieves its actuality only by overcoming its self-bifurcation, and hence, 'working off' its natural determinacy, that is its immediacy, singularity, into universality. Hence, *Bildung* becomes an "immanent moment of the absolute" (Ibid., § 187 N).

70   *Enz* § 533.

71   *Enz* §§ 529 ff.; *Rph* §§ 209 ff.

72   *Enz* §§ 533 ff.; *Rph* §§ 230 ff.

of economics.[73] Economics in particular plays an important role for Hegel's elaborations on the system of needs. It leads him to the concept of a rational market economy, that is, a market economy regulated by reason, a market economy that satisfies the requirements of reason.[74] It is not surprising at all that Hegel's conception has been qualified as "philosophical economics."[75]

(b) This focus on the economy is related to Hegel's first moment of the civil society: the system of needs.[76] As such, Hegel's doctrine of the civil society is also the testament of a historical process of emancipation. Individuals free themselves from their traditional connection to societal and political constellations by recognizing individual civil rights and liberties. It is a merit of Hegel having captured the principles of the civil society and to distinguish them from the principles of the political state: society and state are governed by principles of their own, and hence, do not coincide (although Hegel does not, like neoliberalism, exorcise the state out of society but, in contrast, conceives of the state as a condition of the possibility of societal activity). The one principle—the concrete person as a whole of needs—and the other principle—its relation to other persons of the same kind and the resulting system of dependencies—initially lead to a mode of satisfaction that does not take place as an "immediate" occupancy but is mediated by the will of the possessor and "labor."[77]

For Hegel, "political economy" (*Staatsökonomie*) is guided from such perspectives; it aims to understand the "relationship and the movement" of humans in their quantitative and qualitative determinacy, or to reveal the

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73   —even then, when, in a simplifying way, organizations are primarily understood as commercial enterprises.

74   By contrast, the way neoliberalism (Von Hayek, Friedman, etcetera) understands the modern economy as freedom and welfare machineries—developing one-sidedly Adam Smith's idea of the economy as a system of freedom—underestimates the destabilizing power of the dynamism of the economy (banking crisis, real estate bubble, globalization, etcetera), just as the anti-liberal, totalitarian Rousseauian or Marxist version of understanding modern economy disregards the freedom and the rights of the individual.

75   Compare recently K. Vieweg, *Das Denken der Freiheit: Hegels Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (München: Fink, 2012), p. 289, who refers to Roza's talk of "philosophy of the economy" (*Wirtschaftsphilosophie*). The economic character of Hegel's system of needs has been underlined often. See, for instance, L. Heyde, *De verwerkelijking van de vrijheid: Een inleiding in Hegels rechtsfilosofie* (Leuven, Assen [etc.]: Universitaire Pers Leuven; Van Gorcum, 1987), p. 178; T. Petersen and H. F. Fulda, 'Hegels "System der Bedürfnisse"', *Dialektik* (1999), 129–46; H. Schnädelbach, 'Der objektive Geist', in H. Drüe, et al. (ed.), *Hegels "Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften" (1830): Ein Kommentar zum Systemgrundriß* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), pp. 289–316, at p. 306.

76   *Enz* §§ 524 ff.; *Rph* §§ 189 ff.

77   *Enz* § 524; *Rph* § 189.

economic laws in human behavior.[78] Hegel refers to representatives of classics of economics like Smith, Ricardo, and Say. Whereas Hegel does not conceive of the family as οἰκονομία but as a relation based on feeling, under the title of "system of needs" he deals with themes like needs and their satisfaction, labor and optimizing its productivity, assets (*Vermögen*) and the economic division in the form of estates (*Stände*) related to it, in short, economic constellations. Here, humans are to some extent conceived of as a utility factor, as in the context of need satisfaction, the tendency to increase the abstract character of labor (specialization of production processes and division of labor) leads the "dependencies" and "inter-relations" of humans into "total necessity,"[79] and hence, into "unconditioned dependency" of the societal context.[80]

In the system of needs, Hegel addresses the modern economy. The premodern economy (οἰκονομία) concerned the household (οἶκος). The doctrine of the household or of the art of managing it (οἰκονομική) dealt with production and acquisition of goods as well as family and power relations. Interactions between the various households, for instance on the 'market', were only of peripheral significance. Barter and the phenomena accompanying it were thematic in an ethical perspective of justice. *As* economy, issues like the production of goods, distribution, markets, employment, the monetary system, etcetera as well as the institutions involved were not discussed in themselves before the seventeenth century, when they were dealt with under the discipline called 'political economy' (also called: economics, *Nationalökonomie, Vokswirtschaftslehre*) that conducted itself to determine the laws of the economy itself.[81] Initially it was concerned—as it were transferring Aristotle's concept of οἶκος to the macro level—with the arrangement of society or the state under the perspective of increasing productivity and wealth. As Smith, founding father of political economics, puts it, it was concerned with 'the wealth of nations'; nota bene, the wealth of the individual (income, subsistence) in the

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78   *Rph* § 189 N.—See for the difference between classical economics and neoclassical economics R. Manstetten, *Das Menschenbild der Ökonomie: Der homo oeconomicus und die Anthropologie von Adam Smith* (Freiburg i. B.: Alber, 2000), Part 1. See on Hegel's reception of political economy M. Riedel, *Zwischen Tradition und Revolution: Studien zu Hegels Rechtsphilosophie*, erw. Neuausg (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1982), pp. 116 ff. The system of needs is closely related to Smith's concept of economy as a system of economic subjects with interests of their own that depend upon each other to satisfy these interests.

79   *Rph* § 198.

80   *Enz* § 526.

81   Cf. Manstetten, *Menschenbild der Ökonomie*, pp. 37 ff.; T. Petersen, *Individuelle Freiheit und allgemeiner Wille: Buchanans politische Ökonomie und die politische Philosophie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), chaps. 1 and 2.

society.[82] For Smith, in contrast to Aristotle,[83] the economy is a system that fulfills its function best by leaving the individual extensive free space to pursue his/her self-interests: a 'system of natural freedom'. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, neoclassical economics (Walras, Jevons, Menger, Robbins, Friedman, Becker) has modelled this approach into a doctrine of the homo economicus, in a most striking bias distortion even understanding economic behavior as the foundation of human behavior as such.[84] Whereas classical economics (Smith, Malthus, Ricardo, Mill, Marx) is closely related to the striving for assets, wealth, increased productivity, neoclassical economics, by contrast, turns labor, production, acquiring assets, etcetera into subordinate determinations, conceiving of economic behavior in general as striving for pleasure and maximal satisfaction, that is to say, for 'utility'. As a consequence, economics is modelled from a theory of material welfare into a theory of optimizing decisions. This became the dominant approach of economics in the twentieth century.[85] Important features of this approach are, among others, the 'marginal revolution' (that is, conceiving of economic constellations in mathematical terms) and 'methodological individualism' (that is, reducing economic action to the striving of individuals for utility).

If one accepted, in conformity with the original approach of political economics, that there is a genuine sphere of economic phenomena, namely the sphere of production ('allocation') and distribution of wealth (capital goods, consumer goods, services) under conditions of scarcity—and hence, not dissolving the sphere of economic phenomena into the economic methodology of maximizing utility and, by implication, shaping economics into a (naïve) general theory of human behavior—then we can perceive a fundamental difference between the knowledge perspective of economics and that of organization theory.

Both disciplines are concerned with optimizing welfare, and thereby with 'utility' too. In this respect there is no difference between the disciplines.

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82   A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Dublin: Whitestone, 1776).

83   For Aristotle, the house as the foundation of the subsistence of autarkic citizens enables these citizens to participate in the life of the polis.

84   —see Becker et al., videlicet what in the economic literature is called 'economic imperialism'. On this topic compare C. Krijnen, 'Values and the Limits of Economic Rationality: Critical Remarks on "Economic Imperialism"', in P. Koslowski (ed.), *Elements of a Philosophy of Management and Organization* (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2010), pp. 111–36.

85   Within the parlance of L. Robbins, *An Essay on Nature and Significance of Economic Science* (London: McMillan, 1932), p. 15, economy addresses the economy of "human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses."

However, even if we leave aside the fact that Hegel had to work with the economics of his time (political economy), and hence, that part of economics that has the national economy as its explanandum and not, like business economics, the business enterprise—in this respect already differing from organization theory, as organization theory is indifferent regarding national economy and business economy—hence, even if we took economics and organization theory to have the same phenomena for their respective analyses, then there would still be a crucial difference. The subject matter, the theme to address, the problem to deal with differs: organization theory is bothered with the organizational aspect, the economic sciences with the economic aspect.

The organizational aspect concerns the form of social units in which purposes are actualized. Classical organization theory is concerned with, for instance, issues like rationalizing or optimizing production processes by management (Taylor), differentiation of management functions (Fayol),[86] processes of goal-setting and formalization (Simon), internal informal organizational constellations (Mayo), taking also the organizational environment into account as an essential factor for the survival of social systems (Selznick, Parsons), or shifting the focus from the structure of organization to that of organizing (Weick, Giddens). Basically, 'sociological' points of view guide the concern. The economic dimension is a specification of this form of actualizing purposes. Economics (*Volkswirtschaftslehre*), in contrast, deals with, as it is put today, macro-economic and micro-economic issues. Micro-economics is concerned with the economic behavior of economic agents (households, firms), focusing on the exchange of goods and services on markets and analyzing both the behavior of the actors on these markets and the structures of these markets themselves including their institutional conditions. The doctrine of market equilibrium takes center stage here. It leads to price formation, and hence,

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86   Fayol, for example, who is often credited with being the proper founding father of organization theory, distinguishes 'general principles' of management, like division of labor, authority and responsibility, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, subordination of individual interests to the general interest, and esprit de corps. Management, as an activity, consists of various 'elements': planning, organizing—"to provide it with everything useful to its functioning," main categories: material and personnel organization (H. Fayol, *General and Industrial Management*, (transl., original 1917) (London: Pitman, 1949), p. 53)—, directing, controlling. The sketched framework is independent of the purpose pursued, and hence, applies to all undertakings. Fayol conceptualizes it as a general doctrine of management. Management, however, makes up only one of several activities (especially within industrial enterprises). To these belong, for instance, commercial, financial, and auditing activities, to be distinguished from those managerial activities mentioned (Ibid., pp. 3 ff.).

to coordination of behavior. Macro-economics, on the other hand, deals with the economy as a whole to explain broad aggregates and their interactions: it is interested in the national account, income and employment theory, growth theory, economic cycle theory, and not least in the role the state plays and/or should play in the macro-economic context.

Looking at Hegel's philosophy of spirit, the highlighted differences can be formalized as follows. Economy itself is a *figure* (shape) of objective spirit, or more precisely, of *Sittlichkeit*, whereas organization only concerns a formal *aspect* of this figure: the orientation towards the cooperative actualization of the purposes of economic behavior. Organizations as phenomena of spirit, therefore, only exist as commercial enterprises, state enterprises, bureaucracies, and so forth. As a consequence, organization does not coincide with any of Hegel's spheres of objective spirit. By contrast, organization concerns a *subsequent theme*. The place to expose this theme is Hegel's 'system of needs'. Organization in itself relates to *Sittlichkeit* as such, as the normativity we are living in and the condition of actualizing determined purposes. Organization is effective throughout. However, with regard to the two determinations of purpose-determinacy and formalization, which are guiding for the concept of the organization of organization theory, organization as an issue should be addressed subsequent to the satisfaction of needs in the system of needs.

1.6   *Organization in the State?*

Concerning Hegel's concept of the state, the result illustrated at the end of the previous section implies two different matters to pay attention to: a negative one (a) and a positive one (b).

(a) The place to expose the *concept* of organization is not identical with the place the *term* occurs prominently in Hegel's philosophy of spirit, that is, in the elaborations of the (substantial, political) state. Hegel conceives of the state as the "self-conscious substance of *Sittlichkeit*—the union of the principle of the family and the civil society."[87] As such a union, the state is their "ground" and "first."[88] Within the state, as the "actuality of concrete freedom,"[89] a concrete, living, rational (*vernünftig*), free community of subjects develops and always has already been developed. In contrast to the 'state of understanding' of civil society, the state now is an "absolute unmoved end in itself":[90] it has emerged (in the realm of objective spirit) as the substance that turned into subject.

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87   *Enz* §§ 535 ff.; cf. *Rph* § 257.
88   Ibid., § 256 N.
89   Ibid., § 260.
90   Ibid., § 258.

The purpose pursued by this state is the "general interest as such" and with that, as its "substance," the "preservation of the particular (*besonderen*) interests"; it "knows" what it "wants" and acts on the basis of "known purposes" and "laws," which are not only "in itself" but "for the consciousness."[91]

In the chapter on the state of his doctrine of *Sittlichkeit*, Hegel does indeed apply the terminology of 'organization' and 'organizing', in the same way as that of 'organism'. The state is an "organism that relates itself to itself."[92] The metaphor, or to be more precise, the anaphora of 'organism' expresses that the state is not a mechanism, that is to say, not a whole of which the parts are merely external to each other: it is a living whole whose parts have their respective independence only within the whole. From a certain perspective, each part is at the same time the whole. The organic structure of the state enables Hegel to comprehend the state as an inner teleology. To this extent, the state sublates the preceding principles of *Sittlichkeit*: the family and civil society. These principles can evolve and achieve their unity in the state: the state is their true ground.[93] From this usage of 'organism', it becomes clear that the term refers to the structure of speculative comprehension, and hence, to the speculative structure of the concept (or to put it in more detail, to the idea in its immediacy).

The same applies to 'organization'. Organization, however, emphasizes not so much the cooperation between moments but focuses on the inner structure itself. Hegel speaks of conceptual relations as of the "organization of the concept of freedom,"[94] of the state as a will that unfolds itself as actual spirit into the "organization of a world,"[95] of the political constitution that is the "organization of the state,"[96] of a state "developed in its organization, hence, strong state," of the "state organization" or the "organization of the state,"[97] of a state as "organized in itself,"[98] "differentiated (*gegliedert*) and truly organized,"[99] of the self-determination of the concept in itself, making up the rational

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91   Ibid., § 270; cf. *Enz* § 537.

92   *Rph* § 259, cf. §§ 267, 269, 270 N, 271, 271 N.

93   See, for instance, Ibid., § 278 N. Here, Hegel emphasizes that in an animal organism the "parts" are "organic moments"; their isolation or independent subsistence would be "disease." For Hegel, the state, then, is "essentially an organization of such parts, each of them a circle, and no moment exhibits itself as an inorganic multitude" (Ibid., § 303 N).

94   Ibid., § 261 A.

95   Ibid., § 270 A.

96   Ibid., § 271.

97   Ibid., § 270 A.

98   Ibid., § 263 A.

99   Ibid., § 260 A.

(*Vernünftige*) in the state-organization,"[100] of "inner distinction" as "developed organization in itself," "differentiated (*gegliedert*) organization,"[101] and of the "organization of the administrative bodies."[102] Hegel addresses this "organization of the state" as "constitutional law" (*inneres Staatsrecht*).[103] This concerns the state in its inner freedom-functional arrangement.

This use of 'organization' follows, on the one hand, the customs of Hegel's time. As mentioned, in the era of the French Revolution and of German idealism, the concept of organization concerns the state and other organizational forms of political sovereignty.[104] On the other hand, Hegel deals with the structure of the state as a spiritual 'organism': organization concerns the actual structure or differentiation of a figure of spirit that is entirely free—a free organization of free beings. Hence, the issue at hand is the organization of freedom.

Hegel's thematization of the organization of freedom, however, takes place in a specific regard that differs from that of organization theory. Unlike in civil society as the sphere of particularity, the purpose to actualize on the level of the state is not a particular, arbitrary, at the most relatively universal purpose. To the contrary, it is that which is in itself and for itself universal: the rationality (*das Vernünftige*) of the will. Here, the state is not a state of understanding, no longer an external state but the substantial state, the self-conscious substance of *Sittlichkeit.* For organization theory, in contrast, the organization of the state only makes up one specific type of organization. Moreover, organization theory is not concerned with organization as a way to structure or differentiate the state as the actualization of right, and hence, with a figure of

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100   Ibid., § 272 N.

101   Ibid., § 273 N.

102   Ibid., § 290, cf. §§ 279 N, 279 A, 280 A, 281 A, 290 N, 297 A, 302 A.

103   Ibid., §§ 260 ff. See also *Enz* § 539, where he talks about the state as an "organized" whole and of the constitution as the "articulation (*Gegliederung*) of state-power" as well as of the constitution as "organization" of the actuality of justice, videlicet freedom. Hegel (Ibid., § 540) links the guarantee of the constitution to the "actual organization" of the self-consciousness (of a nation). He speaks of an "organized authority" (Ibid., § 540 N) and conceives of the family and the civil society as "natural organization" of the government, whereby (also) the "organization" of the government as differentiation of powers follows the logic of the concept (Ibid., § 541). In conformity with this logic of the concept, Hegel addresses the division of powers, which he conceives of as "organization" (Ibid., § 541 N). Here, we can even find an organization witticism: "What disorganizes the unity of logical reason, equally disorganizes actuality." Compare for organization also Ibid., § 544 N: an "organized nation" is one in which a governmental power exists.

104   Cf. chap. 5.2.3.

objective spirit: organization theory is concerned with an *aspect* of this structure, differentiation, or figure.

(b) Interestingly enough though, in Hegel's discussion of the state, and especially of constitutional law, many moments come up for discussion that qualify organization *in general*, regardless of the pursued purpose, even if Hegel addresses them only with regard to the state, and hence, with regard to the purpose of the universal. Such moments will become determinations of the concept of organization to be exposed. In addition, they exhibit tendencies that can even be taken into account as the fundamental principles of organization.

Differing from the state as such, the 'political state proper' is an organism that is not only a rational order of communal life. In fact, the political state concerns a specific form; it enables the effectivity of the idea of the political state as an entity whose "purpose"[105] or "essence"[106] is the universal (the universal interest, the universal in itself and for itself). This state is already conceptually effective in both preceding figures of *Sittlichkeit*: family and civil society (see the 'administration of justice' and the 'police and corporation'). Without this effectiveness, and hence, without stabilizing moments, *Sittlichkeit* would simply disintegrate. Therefore, pursuing and actualizing particular interests requires, as a condition of its own possibility, something universal that retains and penetrates it—it makes up the framework within which it can be what it is. As we have, seen, however, the modern concept of organization is not specifically about the effectiveness of the idea of the state but about actualizing purposes as such. Hence the interests pursued are arbitrary; they can be particular or universal interests (the point here is not the arbitrariness but the indifference concerning possible content). The "laws" as state laws are certainly conceived of as the "final end" and the "determination of the content of objective freedom."[107] This type of universality, however, should be distinguished from the universality of arbitrary actualization of purposes. Here too, "freedom and equality"[108] are effective, but they cannot make up the 'constitution' of any organization: organizations must have a constitution that suits their particular purpose, just as the state, as focused on the universal, has a constitution that suits its purpose.

Hence, the constitution of the state as a structure that mediates between the universal and the particular, both in an objective (constitution) and a subjective (disposition) direction, concerns a specification of organization. Whereas

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105   *Rph* § 207.
106   *Enz* § 537.
107   Ibid., § 538.
108   Ibid., § 539 N.

organization in general involves a functional division of its parts or members, the organization of the state in its effectivity concerns the 'division of powers'. The actuality of freedom is the dominating perspective in this regard. The state as the actuality of the substantial will is not only the self-consciousness that has been raised to its universality.[109] As with this, at the same time, it is the actuality of freedom in such a way that not only the personal singularity and its particular interests are able to develop fully, but that they "by themselves" deliberately and volitionally merge into the interest of the universal, which for them, thus, is their universal, final purpose, or substantial spirit.[110] The recognized universal in the political state, however, is not the particular of arbitrary organization. Nevertheless, any organization requires the recognition of some universal, penetrating an organized entity, for example the organization of set purposes (as in the rational concept of organization) or the overarching purpose of 'survival' (as in the natural or organic concept of organization). Something universal is acknowledged consciously, and by implication, the mediating structure between singularity, particularity, and universality is too.

Although on the level of the state, Hegel specifies this structure in a) the power of the sovereign,[111] b) the executive power,[112] and c) the legislative power,[113] from the perspective of actualizing purposes as such, this concerns a specification that results from the purpose of the political state as the (concrete) universal interest. Nonetheless, any organization requires a functional division, including the corresponding division of labor. And despite the emphasis of the rational organization concept on the 'conscious design' of an organization (versus the natural development, favored by the natural organization concept), organization is not simply 'something made' (any more than the state is):[114] normally, it is the result of a historical development, preceding any 'making' and preforming it, and hence, embedding the 'making' of organizations and the possibilities of such making.[115] That Hegel grants the monarch a prominent position—the monarch functions as the person (individual) in whom ultimate decisional power is invested and that therefore also

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109   *Rph* § 258.

110   Ibid., § 260.

111   Ibid., §§ 275 ff.

112   Ibid., §§ 287 ff.

113   Ibid., §§ 298 ff.

114   Ibid., §§ 273 A, 274 incl. N and A.

115   Cf. Ibid., § 274 A: "No constitution can . . . be created merely by subjects." An insight that, for instance, the natural organization concept pits against the rational concept, and that also has the power to bring the contemporary political fury of 'nation building' to reason.

symbolizes the power and unity of the state—draws the attention to various organizational problems. Such problems are, for instance, organizational structure, leadership, and (ultimate) responsibility, which in the order of the political state as oriented towards substantial freedom obtain a specific shape, suitable to its specific purpose.

The various functional units of the state are differentiated in themselves too. For example, as Hegel shows, the function of executing and applying decisions as well as continuing and upholding existing decisions, that is the "executive power," is differentiated in itself.[116] The executive power (leadership, management) can be no more a mere technocracy than the state can; at the very least such an organization will no longer be supported by the community of *Sittlichkeit*, which any organization is. Whereas on the level of the state a technocratic order would contradict the idea of freedom, in general, on the level of actualizing purposes as such, the specific context will decide rapidly about the consequences of a technocratic organization. Furthermore, Hegel distinguishes a number of functional administrational units,[117] hence, emphasizing the issue of organizational structure, and within this context themes like centralism (and subsidiarity), excessive regulation, responsibility, hierarchy, the tension between the particular interests of the participants and the universal purpose of the whole, division of labor.[118] From an organizational point of view, it is also interesting that in his doctrine of *Sittlichkeit*, Hegel continuously touches upon the theme of recruitment of personnel, and hence, of the personal division of labor, which is an important issue for the founding fathers of organization theory.[119] As in the civil society, differences in the estates result from "natural talent," "skill," "arbitrariness," (and also "accident"),[120] and personnel for public office should be recruited on the basis of objective criteria of competence.[121] Differing from organization as such, which is always related to and determined by something universal, in particular the general estate (civil servants) haven taken on themselves the charge of universal purposes as the "essential function" of their "particular life."[122] Hegel also, of course with regard to civil servants, discusses the theme of moral competence, or as we

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[116] Ibid., § 287.

[117] Ibid., §§ 288 f.

[118] Ibid., §§ 289 f.

[119] Cf. F. W. Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (New York: Harper, 1911), and Fayol, *Management*.

[120] *Enz* § 527; cf. *Rph* §§ 207, 303 N.

[121] Ibid., § 291; cf. *Enz* § 543.

[122] Ibid., § 543; cf. *Rph*, §§ 294, 303.

would say today, of integrity,[123] as well as issues like salary,[124] abuse of power, and corruption.[125] At the same time, for Hegel, the (quantitative) "size of the state" is a buffer, and hence, the size of an organization a guarantor for stability, a promoter of *Sittlichkeit* versus the predominance of the manifold particular interests.[126] Hegel conceives of the government (executive power) as the "continuous production of the state and its constitution."[127] The state as a spiritual organism can only be preserved in its orientation towards the universal by a purposeful division of functional units of organization. This purposeful division, however, needs to be a division that is differentiated in itself.

2   Organization in Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit, Speculatively

It is clear, then, that we can carve out several aspects from Hegel's doctrine of *Sittlichkeit* to be considered for themselves, that is from the perspective of organization. They appear as moments of the concept of organization as such, not immediately as moments of self-knowledge of the absolute idea as absolute spirit (which is Hegel's project). These moments, in conformity with the method of a philosophical determination of reality, have to be based on both the *material* and the *logic* of the concept, or in short, on the matter itself.

2.1   *The Material Foundation of Organization*

Although we could allusively emphasize moments of the concept of organization in Hegel's philosophy, an explicit thematization is absent due to the focus of Hegel's philosophy of spirit. For this reason, superordinate concepts that divide (articulate) the concept of organization and enable its material differentiation are absent too—not to mention their speculative order.

The first task, thus, is to establish superordinate concepts for the division, and hence, the articulation of the concept of organization. Interestingly enough, the history of transcendental philosophy offers a possible handle. At any rate, contemporary transcendental philosophies of the economic-social contain potential in this respect. As previously said,[128] Flach's analysis of the idea of utility results in the economic-social fundamental values of economic

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123   Ibid., §§ 293 f.—Fayol, *Management*, among others, is of the opinion that it is disastrous for a manager to be morally compromised, as recently happened in the banking crises.

124   *Rph* § 294.

125   Ibid., §§ 295 f.

126   Ibid., § 296.

127   *Enz* § 541.

128   Cf. chap. 4.

and social profitability, sustainability, and favorability of labor. I have suggested that with these values a perspective occurs that is not addressed by Hegel. Although this perspective is related to freedom, it does not qualify objective-spiritual figures of unconditionedness on the level of unconditionedness. Actually it concerns the dimension of the inner instrumental (teleological) purposefulness of these figures, that is to say, the dimension of their inner purposive (appropriate) organization in conformity with the value of utility.

Flach takes the principles of profitability, sustainability, and favorability into account as the fundamental values (or defining moments) of the idea of the utile, that is of the idea of the economic-social. Within the framework of a Hegelian determination of organization, however, these principles can be useful in the determination of the purposive organization of figures of objective spirit. They depict the basic material moments of Hegel's doctrine of *Sittlichkeit* (as shown above) regarding its relevance for organization. The triadic structure of those principles or fundamental values predisposes them to a speculative articulation in conformity with the logic of the concept.

In Flach's elaborations on the economic-social sphere, the concept of labor takes center stage.[129] The philosophy of the economic-social discusses labor as "production and calculation" as well as "consumption and welfare." This discussion evolves in conformity with Flach's schematism of reason, that is, with the distinction between constitutive principles, universal-regulative principles, and specific-regulative principles.[130] It leads to the economic-social fundamental values of economic and social profitability, sustainability, and favorability (of labor). What do these fundamental values mean?

The principle of *profitability* concerns the exploitation (*Verwertung*) of what is (in either way) pre-given, which is accomplished by labor. Hence, it addresses an "effort," leading to a "result." This result is subjected to the purpose of "utility," which is regarded as imperative to establish "profitable relationships," (profitable in the sense of production, calculation, consumption, and welfare). In this way, a uniform spectrum of economic-social

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129 Compare for the following W. Flach, *Grundzüge der Ideenlehre: Die Themen der Selbstgestaltung des Menschen und seiner Welt, der Kultur* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1997), pp. 141–5.

130 This schematism is essential to Flach's conception of the fundamental axiotic relationship. The fundamental axiotic relationship contains an "order of values in their actualization" according to "different moments" (Ibid., pp. 62 f.). Such an order resulted already in Flach's theory of knowledge (W. Flach, *Grundzüge der Erkenntnislehre: Erkenntniskritik, Logik, Methodologie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1994), pp. 77 with 249, 264 ff., 355 ff., 394 ff.). In his outline of the system of philosophy, Flach models the theory of knowledge into a philosophia prima (see, for instance, Flach, *Ideenlehre*, pp. 39 f.). It concerns an innovative advance of Kantian doctrines.

phenomena is 'constituted'. The principle of *sustainability*, by contrast, 'regulates' these established profitable relationships to the effect that it concerns relationships that "permanently repeat themselves," and hence, relationships that "stabilize themselves." Only then is the exploitation of the given material "truly efficient." Economic-social phenomena, therefore, include, in whatever form, their "maintenance"; their supersession is a "sublimation," meaning a perfection of profitable relationships. In this regard, the principle of *favorability* takes account of the fact that labor is not uniform, which is to say, labor is or should be divided on the basis of "skill" (*Geschicklichkeit*). Only if this is the case, is the effort favorable. Exploiting the pre-given favorably requires a skilled allocation of labor; labor should 'pay off' for all participants (the individual, group(s)) in one way or another.

Many subsequent economic-social phenomena can be connected with this division or articulation of fundamental values (for instance relationships regarding production, labor, market, technology, power, right, or state). A conducted material philosophy of the economic-social would have to work out the values determining such phenomena; these values, therefore, are derivative values. It is not the concern of the present study to address them. Its concern, by contrast, is to draw the attention to the relevance of the above for the speculative content of the concept of organization.

This relevance, in the first instance, involves linking Flach's fundamental values of the economic-social sphere with the material of Hegel's doctrine of *Sittlichkeit*. The first part of this chapter has not only shown that the system of needs is the proper place to expose the concept of organization, it also substantiated that Hegel's doctrine of the state contains numerous moments that qualify organization in general. The purpose of the civil society has been revealed as securing the satisfaction of needs in a 'stable and universal way', which involves the inclusion of moments of the state. Hegel goes on to touch upon the issue of the allocation of labor, regarding the competences of the subject, and hence the personnel allocation of labor, as well as the objective qualification of the allocation of labor (its function for actualizing freedom). And that all this should pay off for the individual involved belongs to the disposition of Hegel's doctrine of the civil society: the civil society is about enabling individuals to pursue their own welfare according to their own opinion. The same applies to the state: its essential functions include secure welfare.

2.2   *Speculative Articulation of Organization*

Such hints should already suffice to make evident that Flach's divisional concepts of the economic-social have a material foundation in Hegel's philosophy too. Articulating them speculatively involves logically modeling Flach's

Kantian schematism of constitution and regulation into a relation of Hegelian universality, particularity, and singularity. As a result, the fundamental values of profitability, sustainability, and favorability would be translated into the Hegelian concept. Admittedly, such a translation into the logic of the concept can only concern making it plausible that the divisional concepts mentioned are capable of being interpreted as the moments of the concept, which are the universal, particular, and singular. To develop them in terms of a logic of the concept, a logic of judgment, and a logic of inference would transcend the task and purpose of the present study. A conducted philosophy of organization would be subject to it. The present study, as already mentioned, aims to present the place of the concept of organization in the system of philosophy, and hence, to expose it.[131]

First, it is an important methodological feature of a speculative philosophy that determinations do not join in 'externally': that they do not stem from an outward position but from an "immanent deduction."[132] Accordingly, "the concept as such" contains itself the moments of universality, particularity, and singularity;[133] the concept is the "concrete par excellence."[134]

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131   It is a merit of Vieweg, *Denken der Freiheit*, not only to insist on the logical foundation of Hegel's philosophy of right—pace its despisers—but at the same time to undertake the effort to exhibit this logical foundation. Regarding the concept of organization, the same would have to be done. Such an effort, however, would have to surpass even Vieweg's interpretation, as Vieweg (Ibid., p. 44), unfortunately, is of the opinion that according to Hegel, freedom can "only be conceived of within the paradigm of the will," whereas for Hegel himself, the 'concept' is that which is originally free (see on this recently: C. Krijnen, 'Freiheit als ursprüngliche Einheit der Vernunft: Hegels begriffslogische Lösung eines Kantischen Problems', in W. Neuser and P. Stekeler-Weithofer (ed.), *Natur und Geist* (forthcoming); H. F. Fulda, 'Der eine Begriff als das Freie und die Manifestationen der Freiheit des Geistes', in C. Wirsing, A. F. Koch, F. Schick and K. Vieweg (eds.), *Hegel—200 Jahre Wissenschaft der Logik* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2014), pp. 15–41; F. Knappik, *Im Reich der Freiheit: Hegels Theorie autonomer Vernunft* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013)). This task, however, still awaits its fulfilment. The wide-spread simplistic scheme 'thesis–antithesis–synthesis' annihilates any complexity and fruitful interpretation and appropriation of Hegel. It merely offers a caricature. (Hegel himself makes fun of such schemes.)

132   *II* p. 219.—As it is put in the *Philosophy of Right*: "the immanent differentiation of the concept itself." (*Rph* § 33 N).

133   *Enz* § 163.

134   Ibid., § 164. See for Hegel's doctrine of the concept, for instance, Arndt A., Iber C. and Kruck G. (eds.), *Hegels Lehre vom Begriff, Urteil und Schluss* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006); Koch A. F., Oberauer A. and Utz K. (eds.), *Der Begriff als die Wahrheit: Zum Anspruch der Hegelschen "subjektiven Logik"* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003); Düsing, *Syllogistik und Dialektik*; Fulda, *Hegels Dialektik*.

The concept, then, judges, that is divides (*ur-teilt*) itself into judgments. The judgment is the concept in its particularity,[135] and subsequently incorporates its universality, particularity, and singularity by modes of inference, and hence, turns into the "unity of the concept and the judgment."[136] As a result, the concept is only determined by itself, and not by any externality. The singular is the actual as emerging from the concept,[137] as the particular that is reflected in itself and, with that, is restored to the universal. The speculative method of philosophical comprehension characteristically takes shape as a '(self)movement of the concept'. This leads to a synthetic unity that is self-mediation of the concept, in other words, its "immanent reflection," and hence, "manifested relationship."[138] Instead of the mere assertion that this or that relation exists, the concept develops itself "out of itself": it is an "immanent progression and production of its own determinations."[139]

Second, it must be emphasized that the beginning of a speculative sequence is *as* a beginning something immediate.[140] The meaning of the progress, again, is that the beginning, as the abstract universality it is, determines itself, becomes 'for itself' the universal.[141] Hence, the concept 'realizes' itself by going through its otherness; it is the 'truth' or the 'posited' universal.[142] Subsequently, the achieved result turns into a beginning again.[143] The method extends itself into a "system" of determinations of thought.[144]

Regarding specifically the *free will* as the starting concept of the philosophy of objective spirit, the free will must initially count as "immediate," then as "reflected in itself," and finally, as the unity of both determinations, that is as "substantial" will.[145] By implication, it contains in itself the "pure indeterminacy," "universality,"[146] the "transition from undifferentiated indeterminacy to differentiation and determination," "particularization,"[147] and the

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135   *Enz* §§ 165 f.

136   Ibid., § 181. Hegel's play with the German words *Schluß, zusammenschließen, entschließen* is illuminating, yet it does not have an equivalent application in English.

137   Ibid., § 163 N.

138   *II* p. 242. See for this and what follows Krijnen, *Philosophie als System*, chap. 3.4.

139   *Rph* § 31.

140   *II* p. 488.

141   Ibid., p. 490.

142   Ibid., p. 498 f.

143   Ibid., p. 499.

144   Ibid., p. 500.

145   *Enz* § 487.

146   *Rph* § 5.

147   Ibid., § 6.

"unity of these both moments," the "particularity that is reflected in itself, and hence, restored to universality—singularity," veracious "self-determination."[148] Therefore, it contains exactly that "freedom of the will" that makes up its "concept or substantiality."[149] The same constellation occurs within the sphere of *Sittlichkeit*: the "substance of *Sittlichkeit* (*sittliche Substanz*)" initially is an "immediate" spirit ("family"), then a "relative totality of relative relations between individuals as independent persons in a formal universality" ("civil society"), and finally the "self-conscious substance" ("state-constitution"),[150] "substantial universality."[151]

The *civil society*, as the external state, or as Hegel also puts it, as a state of understanding, contains as its *first* moment precisely the moment that turned out to be the starting point for an exposition of the concept of organization: "The mediation of need and the satisfaction of the individual through its labor and through the work and satisfaction of the needs of all the others—the system of needs."[152] The 'reflected *Sittlichkeit*' of the external state, which is an organization as such, has

a) as its *abstract universal* determination of the beginning the determinacy that qualifies organizational phenomena in general or as such. Hence, it constitutes phenomena as organizational phenomena. This determination concerns the satisfaction of particular needs by a productive activity that is labor.[153] Labor exploits pre-given material. The formation of pre-given material by labor is subjected to the directive of *profitability*, or of "utility," oriented towards establishing these or those "profitable relationships."

b) This universal dimension of establishing profitable relationships is *particularized* by specifying them into relationships that "permanently repeat," "stabilize," "maintain," and therefore "sublimate" themselves. The formation of pre-given material, more specifically, is hence subjected to the directive of *sustainability* of labor.

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148   Ibid., § 7.
149   Ibid., § 7.
150   *Enz* § 517.
151   *Rph* § 157.
152   Ibid., § 188. Cf. *Enz* § 524.
153   Cf. also *Rph* § 196. For Hegel's concept of labor see, for instance, H.-C. Schmidt am Busch, *Hegels Begriff der Arbeit* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), and recently P. Cobben, *Value in Capitalist Society: Rethinking Marx's Criticism of Capitalism* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2015).

c)   The *substantial unity and truth* of immediacy and reflection in itself, of
      abstract profitability and particular sustainability, is achieved only on the
      basis of a skilled allocation of labor over the individuals.[154] The principle
      of *favorability* of labor assures that the effort 'pays off', that labor is self-
      determined labor, and hence, that labor is actual establishment of profit-
      able relationships. As a result, we have reached the idea in its universal
      existence in and for itself, to be more precise: the idea of *organization.*

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154   —and, of course, by the respective execution.

Epilog

(1) The concept of organization has been exposed philosophically within the framework or meta-perspective of German idealist philosophy. The urge for doing so resulted from a critical reflection on the current debate on the foundations of organization studies and its perpetuating problems. This reflection led us to German idealism and its relevance for a contemporary philosophy of organization. The basic concept of the reality under study, the ontology of organization, is especially controversial in the current debate. However, within the dominant meta-perspectives of positivism, social constructionism, and critical realism a convincing solution is not in sight: a new meta-perspective that offers a more comprehensive and a more fundamental ontology is needed. Although organization (in the sense of organization studies) is not a core topic in German idealist philosophy, it has become clear in the course of the book that this philosophy offers substantial and underestimated possibilities for developing a present-day social ontology in general and an organizational ontology in particular.

Nevertheless, the elaborated exposition of the concept of organization certainly gives rise to many additional questions. One of them concerns a starting point for the meta-theoretical debate. It popped up in the context of the attempt to get an initial grip on the problem of social ontology, but it did not play a role in the subsequent deliberations. I refer here to the fact that the quest for a social ontology for organization studies stems from an epistemological background.[1] It concerned the role of reality for scientific explanations by organizational research or, to be more precise, the role reality played in dealing with the problem of validity of organizational knowledge. Critical realists, to take this meta-perspective as an example, hold that in order to understand the validity of empirical knowledge, an appeal to a non-empirical reality of structures and mechanisms is required, rejecting both the subjectivist ontology of social constructivism and the objectivist ontology of positivism. To pay attention to the structures that constitute social reality would be a methodological consequence of the epistemological position of critical realism. According to critical realism, social phenomena cannot be determined sufficiently in terms of observable inductive behavioral patterns (positivism) or in terms of the discursive practices within which they occur (social constructivism); instead, they should be determined in terms of social structures that are the foundation of these social phenomena.

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1 Cf. chap. 1.3.3.

This constellation of a relationship between ontology, epistemology, and methodology points to the question of how to conceive of what nowadays is called a 'philosophy of science' (containing the epistemology and methodology of the non-philosophical sciences) within the framework of Hegel's system of philosophy. As organizational knowledge concerns a form of theoretical knowledge, Hegel's doctrine of subjective spirit should be taken into consideration in answering this question.[2] Agents in the 'system of needs' certainly require knowledge about their goals and the ways to achieve them. Human consciousness apparently is integrated in the figures of objective spirit, and as a consequence, science is too.

However, going into this relationship between ontology and philosophy of science is not the concern of this epilog, as it would lead to an 'internal' investigation into Hegel's philosophy again. In contrast, the epilog aims to reflect some aspects of the results of the exploration of the idea of organization for the social sciences in general and organization studies in particular. Despite that, the issue mentioned belongs to a comprehensive philosophy of organization; the contemporary debate does indeed show that the phenomenon of organization entails ontological, epistemological, and methodological dimensions.

(2) In chapter one, it was stressed that because organization theorists claim to produce knowledge about organizations, they must at least have an implicit notion of what an organization is. Otherwise they would not be able to study organizations at all. For methodological reasons, every organization theory *presupposes* the determinacy and validity of the concept of organization as the most fundamental concept concerning the object (subject matter) of organization theory, and hence, as the starting point and aim of organizational knowledge. The philosophy of organization, by means of its method of philosophical reflection or comprehending thought, intends to make this implicit concept of organization explicit in a way that it justifies its determinacy and validity. As a result, the concept of organization is no longer a diffuse or dogmatic starting point but the conceptual result of more fundamental philosophical reflections.

Non-philosophical disciplinary attempts at justification of the presupposed meaning of the concept of organization must fail. Though it may seem strange at first sight, it is not the task of organization theory to explore the determinacy and validity of its *framework concepts*. By its organizational research methods, organization theory actually determines its subject matter— organization—*within* that framework and not the framework itself. Framework concepts are the objects of philosophical research. They constitute the unity or totality of organizational phenomena. As philosophy by its method of

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2   Cf. esp. *Enz* §§ 440 ff.

reflection or comprehending thought determines this unity or totality—philosophy determines, to put it in the words of Johan Wolfgang von Goethe's protagonist Faust, "*was die Welt im Innersten zusammenhält*"[3] ("what holds the world together in its inmost folds"), more particularly of course, the world of organization. In terms of classical philosophy we could express it as follows: whereas individual sciences like organization studies produce knowledge on the basis of principles—*cognitio ex principiis*—philosophy is also knowledge of these principles themselves and the way the concrete coalesces from them—*cognitio principiorum.*

The theory and the philosophy of organization, therefore, are intrinsically intertwined. A philosophical justification of the concept of organization, and hence of the framework concepts of organizational knowledge, is implicit in the knowledge claim of any organization theory. Understood properly, philosophy of organization is not involved in a competition with organization studies, for philosophy tries to determine what concept of unity or totality of their subject matter as such is presupposed by organization studies as an individual discipline of science. In order to do so, as we have seen in several chapters of the book, philosophy makes use of the knowledge of the empirical sciences; philosophy of organization, more specifically, draws upon the social sciences including organization theory. The project of determining the concept of organization even started in chapter one by exploring a debate current in organization studies, and for establishing the concept of organization a more in-depth analysis of dominant concepts of organization was inevitable, as we have seen in chapter five. Hence, absorbing the state of affairs in organizational research turned out to be an intrinsic moment of comprehending organization philosophically, and with that of 'translating' empirical concepts into philosophical concepts, which, of course, are provided by philosophy.

To satisfy the needs of reason, this philosophy should itself be conceived of and developed as a systematic unity. In the course of the development of the philosophical concepts that constitute this systematic unity, organization has to appear as a moment of rational activity and, hence, of freedom. In that case, organization makes up an intrinsic part of modern human self-understanding and our modern understanding of the world. This also entails the notions that not any type of philosophy is sufficiently equipped to develop, in a methodological and materially sound way, the determination of the concept of organization. In contrast to philosophies dominant in the organizational discourse, a philosophy modelled within the paradigm of German idealism conceives of

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3   Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, *Faust: D. Tragödie 1. u. 2. Teil, Urfaust*, Sonderausg., 13., neubearb. u. erw. Aufl. Ed. by Erich Trund (München: Beck, 1986), I, rhyme 383.

thought or reason—that is 'subjectivity' in the German idealist sense of the term—as the basic, encompassing, persisting, and all-embracing principle of objectivity. In the course of unfolding this principle, the concept of organization results. More specifically, the exposition of the concept of organization enables what could be called a philosophy of organization in the strict sense. It is established as a discipline within the whole of philosophical disciplines. Among others, philosophy of organization has to take care of the basic concepts of organization theory.

Although in principle the philosophy of organization does not come into conflict with organization theory and its application of basic concepts of organization, by scrutinizing the basic or framework concepts of organization theory—in the first instance the concept of organization itself—however, philosophy certainly contains an important potential and actuality to act as a critical instance regarding organization theory. As individual sciences do not sufficiently reflect and determine the framework or basic concepts they rely on in their determination of empirical phenomena, they contain a perpetuating tendency to absolutize certain aspects of these phenomena. As a consequence, the phenomena are reduced to one or another aspect, neglecting essential other aspects, or aspects which interrelate are conceived of as separate existences. In any event, the intrinsic unity of the framework or the principles on the one hand and the empirical determinations or the concrete on the other is harmed. From the perspective of organization theory, philosophy should step up to the mark here in order to save the organizational phenomena from naïve 'metaphysical' approaches of organization theory, resulting from an insufficient knowledge of the limits and possibilities of the empirical sciences and their methods.

An example of such a tendency is the discussion of whether organization is to be conceived of as a 'substance' (structure, organization) or as a 'process' (structuration, organizing), but in general the several organizational perspectives or paradigms (and schools too) all lead to different methodologies of organization theory, and therefore to different determinations of the subject matter at hand, that is organization. Their integration remains a problem. An idealist philosophy of organization could show how the several aspects of organization which come to the fore in the respective determinations of organization hang together, enabling an interpretation of the organizational world as a whole, though in a more abstract way than organization theory conceives of (or of its parts). Taking seriously the idea that organization theory and organization theories are developed within a framework that they do not explicitly and scientifically deal with is also relevant for the curriculum of organization studies at universities. It should not be reduced to mere technical-pragmatic

matters of how to realize pre-given goals and supply a set of corresponding instruments for this purpose; actually, for the sake of a better understanding of organizations the historical dimension of the discipline and its subject matter, its contested methodology as well as its philosophical (including moral) dimension should play a substantial role too.

Instead of enlarging the gap between philosophy and theory of organization, the continuity of both is restored by eliminating naïve metaphysical speculations. Basic features of organization are not hived off, with the result that, for instance, the natural determinacy of humans is overstressed, underestimating their spiritual and, hence, liberal (*freiheitliche*) determinacy. This overestimation of the embeddedness of humans in natural systems of any kind blocks an adequate understanding of the possibility of self-determination, reducing humans to a mere means for actualizing externally given purposes. Seen as a whole, humans should be taken into account as spiritual beings. This, however, does not imply that the spiritual determinacy of humans is merely culturally conditioned ('culturalization'), as the possibility of self-determination, and hence, the immediate determination by reason instead of by external factors, would then be lost again. Nevertheless, the mere power of self-determination (freedom) should not be reduced to 'negative freedom' (free from . . .) either, neglecting the positive material elements that belong to freedom ('positive freedom', free to . . .) as the ground of self-determination.

Addressing the positive freedom that belongs to organization would even lead to another intriguing, important, and urgent philosophical question: the question of how within the framework of Hegel's speculative philosophy a doctrine of norms for 'ethical life' (Hegel: *Sittlichkeit*), or to put it in Kantian terms, a 'metaphysics of morals' (*Metaphysik der Sitten*), for organizational life, so to speak, a 'metaphysics of organizational morals',[4] is possible. After all, Hegel subordinates normativity to the process of self-knowledge of the absolute idea. As a consequence, the genuine practical impetus of a Kantian type of metaphysics of morals is transformed by higher, more original principles.[5]

At any rate, what was said about eliminating naïve metaphysical speculations due to one-sided reductionist interpretations also applies to the meaning of current, empirically based concepts of organization theory like power, formal and informal organization, leadership, responsibility, human resource

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4   See for example N. E. Bowie, *Business ethics: A Kantian perspective* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), who, in discussion with contemporary organization theory, develops on the basis of Kant's practical philosophy principles for shaping meaningful work and, more in general, a moral company.

5   Cf. chap. 2.4.

management, division of labor, participation, environment, and so on and so forth. Such concepts qualify the organizational world. A philosophy of organization reflects them as framework concepts, justifying them in their determinacy and validity. Philosophy does so in a process of reflection or comprehending thought. The concepts which are part of this process of concept development in the mode of rational necessity, therefore, are by no means 'empty', mere 'speculation', or the result of empirical theory formation. To determine such concepts philosophically, or in Hegel's parlance, to realize the concept of organization into the idea of organization, is the task of a fully-blown philosophy of organization. Developing it first makes sense after the basic concept of this philosophy, the concept of organization, has been established within the system of philosophy. It was the aim of the present book to accomplish this task, that is, to expose, not to realize the concept of organization.

Organization is not opposed to or a contingent part of what is called the Good life: the life within the bounds of reason. It is an intrinsic part of it. Only as such an intrinsic part of the human world does it obtain a sufficient justification. Organization belongs to the actualization of human freedom.

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